Recovering the Sporting Context of Shakespeare's *Henry V*: Reading Court Tennis in Elizabethan and Jacobean England

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This thesis is my own work.

All sources used have been acknowledged.

Signed.....  .....

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Abstract

My primary aim in this thesis is to present a series of original interpretations of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, informed by a new perspective on how sport, and especially Court Tennis, functioned as a metaphor or trope in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.

The thesis seeks to contextualise Shakespeare's play through study of metaphor and imagery from the sport of Court Tennis, and also, necessarily, through some broader study of the category of 'sport' in the English Renaissance.

I argue in it that the sporting references in Shakespeare's play (especially those relating to tennis) fitted into a long standing literary tradition which would have been well understood by Shakespeare's audiences and readers. I show that metaphors from the sport of Court Tennis were complex and ambiguous in the period: that references to Tennis could, on the one hand, signify a distraction from religion -- could be emblematic of prodigality, of idleness, or of excess; but, could also, on the other hand, signify an appropriate interest in physical exercise and activity. The thesis demonstrates that authors of the period commonly associate Tennis with 'war', with 'sovereignty', with 'youth', and also with 'Fortune', 'risk', and 'chance'. Given that Shakespeare and his audience would have been familiar with these complexities of the Tennis trope, it is worth considering how this trope might inform our reading of *Henry V*. Of particular interest is the way in which it invokes the idea of 'rise and fall' and 'instability' and suggests a criticism of earthly ambition or glory.

This reading of the play is further contextualized in the thesis by a consideration of the Henry V story over the period from the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century. Reference is made to non-Shakespearean versions of the story (such as the *Famous Victories*) and to the Quarto and Folio versions of the play. The thesis argues that the works of Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton and works such as *Gesta Grayorum* and the *Mirror for Magistrates,* show how sporting imagery could be involved in important philosophical debates of the time. Simply put, the thesis argues that if one wishes to interpret Shakespeare's *Henry V* properly it is essential to understand the play's sporting contexts, and especially that of Court Tennis.

A Note on Texts

The orthography of historical texts has been modernized in instances where archaic spellings might otherwise have caused difficulties for the twenty-first century reader. Italicization has been omitted where modern tastes would judge it excessive or arbitrary, but retained when essential to meaning.

A Note on Referencing

Much use has been made of electronic resources including literary databases such as the *Literature Online* collection. In referencing material accessed via such collections I have followed the accepted scholarly practice of including the URL and date the text was accessed as part of the bibliographic entry. (See Appendix 2.)

It should be noted that, in the interests of brevity, footnotes for such entries do not include URLs or access dates. It should also be noted that readers remain free to access the information from other (printed) editions should they so wish.

A Note on Illustrations

Thanks are due to the British Library (BL) for permission to reproduce the image that appears in the appendix to this thesis. Title page for *The World Tost at Tennis* (1620). BL shelfmark C.34.d.45; 162.d.38.

CONTENTS

Introduction

The Impetus

In reflecting upon Shakespeare's *Henry V*, I became intrigued by the famous scene (I.ii) in which King Henry is the recipient of the surprising gift of a "tun" of tennis balls.[1] The historical accuracy of this episode is debatable.[2] However, regardless of whether Shakespeare is recounting and expanding upon an existing mythology or dramatizing an historical event, the scene is so striking that it calls for very serious thought indeed.

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[1] A "tun" can be defined as either a "barrel, cask" or "chest, casket". (Gary Taylor (ed.), *King Henry V* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994; first published by the Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 114 *n.* This work is part of Stanley Wells (gen. ed.), The World's Classics, The Oxford Shakespeare Series.) The editor of the New Cambridge Shakespeare *King Henry V*, Andrew Gurr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), prefers "a heavy casket or box", p. 87. Gurr notes, however, that Holinshed "calls it a barrel", p. 87. See Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, 1587. Unless stated otherwise, references to Holinshed's *Chronicles* are from Allardyce and Josephine Nicoll (eds), *Holinshed's Chronicle, As Used in Shakespeare's Plays* (London: J. M. Dent, 1963, first pub. London, 1927). Similarly, unless stated otherwise subsequent reference to *Henry V* relates to The New Cambridge Shakespeare *King Henry V*, Andrew Gurr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). This is not, however, to be confused with Gurr's edition of the Quarto: Andrew Gurr, *The First Quarto of King Henry V*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, The Early Quartos, Series editor Brian Gibbons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[2] Holinshed reports the tennis ball gift as factual. (W. G. Boswell-Stone (ed.), *Shakespeare's Holinshed* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966, first published 1896), p. 173.) However, Shakespeare departs from Holinshed's account of the incident in having it instigated by the Dauphin. The Dauphin, Holinshed tells us, "was not the same man as the sender of the tennis balls." (Andrew Gurr, *King Henry V*, p. 17.) Shakespeare also departs from Holinshed and Hall in the placement of this incident (J. H. Walter, *King Henry V* (London: Methuen, 1967, first published 1954), p. xxiii). This work is part of Harold F. Brooks and Harold Jenkins (gen. eds), The Arden Shakespeare Series. In a later chapter of the thesis, I will consider other evidence which casts some doubt on whether the incident happened at all.

Editors and critics, when glossing the relevant passages, tend to restrict themselves to explaining the now archaic tennis terminology employed within them[3] or direct the reader to the historians Holinshed and Hall,[4] who record that the slur invoked by such a gift relates to Henry's youth and inexperience.[5] Whilst explanations of the terminology of the sport of tennis and consideration of the symbolism of this historical or mythical episode are admirable, critics have nevertheless failed to appreciate the full interpretive possibilities of Shakespeare's scene. The reason for this, I propose to argue, is that critics have failed adequately to explore the political, literary, cultural and historical aspects of the sport of tennis in the Renaissance period. Rather, critics have tended to trivialize or marginalize references to sport in gereral -- perhaps considering it unworthy of serious study.[6]

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[3] Good editions of *Henry V* unfailingly give some exposition of the tennis terminology in Shakespeare's scene (I.ii). In the editions mentioned above, see Andrew Gurr, p. 87, Gary Taylor, pp. 114, 115 and J. H. Walter, pp. 24, 25.

[4] Hall interprets the Dauphin's intention as follows: "the Dauphin thinkynge Kyng Henry to be geuen stil to suche playes and light folies as he exercised & vsed before the tyme that he was exalted to the croune sente to hym a tunne of tennis balles to plaie with, as who saied that he coulde better skil of tennis then of warre, and was more expert in light games then marciall pollicy". (Edward Hall, *The union of the two noble and illustrious families of Lancaster and York*, 1548, xliv^{v}, quoted in Walter, *King Henry V*, p. 24*n.*)

[5] We might also note that Henry's own interpretation of the event - "And we understand him well, How he comes o'er us with our wilder days,/ Not measuring what we made of them..." (I.ii.266-8) - suggests that the insult plays upon the profligate and unproductive manner in which Henry is reported to have spent his youth. Related to this, Andrew Gurr notes the conversion of Henry, through the course of the Henriad, from "idle prince" to "star of England" (Andrew Gurr, *King Henry V*, p. 11; p. 12; pp. 11-13).

[6] An exception is the critic Lisa Hopkins who has considered, briefly, the sporting imagery in another of Shakepseare's plays -- *King Lear*. Hopkins states that there is much sporting imagery in *Lear*, and that this "...seems to be particularly, though not exclusively, focused on metaphors from the game of real tennis." (Lisa Hopkins, "'Base Football Player': This Sporting Life in *King Lear*," in *English Language Notes*, 37:4, 2000, pp. 8-19, pp. 8-9).

Such reluctance to consider sport has been noted by the critic Jeffrey O. Segrave who states that: "Despite its presence in Shakespeare's work, the sport metaphor, interestingly, has rarely been subjected to serious analysis". I propose, in this thesis, to show that far from being "trivial" or "inconsequential" Shakespeare's use of sporting metaphor and image in *Henry V* is, indeed, to quote Segrave, capable of aiding the "delineation and development of character, plot, theme, atmosphere, and dramatic structure".[7]

In this thesis I argue that *Henry V* is a play which encourages one to take an interest in the subject of sport in literature -- particularly the sport of tennis. *Henry V* is an example of a canonical text which has received an extraordinary amount of critical attention -- but almost none which takes note of sport; and it is a work in which many issues of import to Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences are raised and, as I shall argue, often raised through sport. Simply, I see in *Henry V* clear indications of both the literary and cultural importance and the symbolic and political potential of sport (particularly, in this instance, tennis) in the English Renaissance. In Shakespeare's play sport impinges on a number of discourses: it has political and ethical implications, involves itself in religious issues, surfaces in relation to warfare and foreign policy, and even has symbolic importance in debates over the rights and responsibilities of the various estates of society.

It will be clear from the above that my aim in writing this thesis is not to present a comprehensive history of sport in Renaissance England, nor to compile an annotated bibliography of the sport of tennis in the literature of this period. Rather, my aim is simply to explore the interpretive possibilities

[7] Jeffrey O. Segrave, "The Play's the thing" in *Aethlon: The Journal of Sport Literature* 17(1):

created and enabled by the sporting contexts of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. This has required study into where sport (particularly the sport of tennis) fitted into Renaissance philosophy -- and indeed into the Renaissance *mentalité* and, also, study into where sport (again, particularly the sport of tennis) manifests itself in the literature of the time. The results of these efforts are presented in this thesis.

The thesis proceeds from a belief that in a society where the world could -- in a literary sense -- be considered a tennis ball, and life could be seen as sport, one might usefully study literary reference to both 'tennis' and 'sport'. What one might find, the thesis suggests, is that serious themes are informed by playful metaphors in the literature of the English Renaissance. Sport, then, was perhaps more than sport for Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Tennis and Sport

If we are going to successfully map a motif that arguably informs our reading of a play such as Shakespeare's *Henry V*, then we must also consider what type of activity this sport of tennis is -- where does it fit into Renaissance conceptions of the types of activities one might undertake? How does it compare with labour, or with war? Can it be aligned with peace (as a pursuit of peaceful times)? Can it serve as an example of imprudent or improper behaviour? And if so, is this always the case? Is sport itself -- of which tennis is but one example -- subject to criticisms of excess or wastefulness? These sorts of questions and issues need to be canvassed, but can only be considered when one considers both tennis and

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pp. 101-108, 1999, p. 101; p. 102; p. 102.

sport together. By taking the approach of considering both tennis and sport together we are best able to effectively recover the sporting context of Shakespeare's *Henry V* -- which is, after all, the primary concern of this thesis.

Following from this, we are especially interested in exploring motifs from the sport of tennis because they appear prominently in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, and in the Henry V story. However, we also acknowledge that tennis exists as only one part of a well defined taxonomy of sport. We want to know more about tennis -- because that knowledge allows us to discuss how the motif operated in the literature of the period and also how the imagery would have been received by readers and audiences. We want to know more about sport -- because our imagery comes from 'sport'; and we want to know how readers and audiences viewed sport in general, since this, too, influences how the motif would have functioned.

Finally, in our consideration of both tennis and sport, we need to keep in mind that often we are dealing with the 'context' of literature; that is, we are interpreting the text of *Henry V*, as well as other texts, not solely by reading what is on the page, but by extrapolating and interpolating and by making assumptions about what audiences might have known, or thought, or have been asking themselves when they read or heard the literature of the period. And, indeed, a central assumption of this work is that 'context' and 'inter-text' are important when readers, or auditors, interpret a work of literature. That is, texts are not interpreted in a vacuum, but are inseparable from their time, their place, and their cultural environment. Context has a role in how texts will be interpreted.

The Methodology

James Shapiro has suggested, in a recent biographical and historical study of Shakespeare, that:

> When writing about an age that pre-dated newspapers and photographic evidence, plausibility, not certitude, is as close as one can come to what happened."[8]

Certainly, "plausibility, not certitude" is sometimes all one can reasonably expect when attempting to interpret sporting imagery in English Renaissance literature; sometimes one must be satisfied only to 'suggest', rather than to prove. We must accept that it is not always possible to prove beyond a doubt exactly how English Renaissance audiences interpreted the sporting imagery we find in their literature. I believe that it is worthwhile, nevertheless, to speculate plausibly on what these responses may have been. In this belief I am simply following the tenets and methodology of New Historicist criticism.[9]

New Historicism, like most schools of literary theory, has both advantages and disadvantages. Given that I make great use of its methodologies it seems prudent here to explain why I find it so valuable (and also why we might need to be careful in any use of it -- and careful when we read it).

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[8] James Shapiro, 1599: *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005) p. xxiii.

[9] For an introduction to this school of thought see H. Aram Veeser, (ed.), *The New Historicism Reader* (New York, Routledge, 1994). See also the criticism of authors such as Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose, Lisa Jardine, Stephen Orgel, Leah Marcus, David Scott Kastan, Jonathan Dollimore and Jonathan Goldberg.

There seems to me to be most value in New Historicist thought where it considers the "specific historical conditions that have determined the reading and writing of literature," emphasizes the collaborative production of the literary object, and concomitantly recognizes that the author is "neither the solitary source nor the sole proprietor of the meanings that circulate through the text".[10]

Much of the value of New Historicism comes from its faith in the contexualized reading of literature. This faith is arrived at through an understanding that "An author writes always and only within specific conditions of possibility", these being governed by the historical and cultural conditions in which he/she exists. In practical terms, such a realization removes the need for the critic to strive to uncover an idealized authorial intention in the text, rather recognizing that meaning "should be sought precisely in the webs of engagement that permit a text to be written, printed, circulated, and read". This shift away from the author -- but not abandoning the author entirely -- recognizes semantic plurality, which is itself governed partially by authorial intention but also by the cultural milieux of both author and reader alike: "That is, literature is always produced, as well as read...in historically specific forms of imaginative, discursive, and institutional forms of possibility. Its meanings are not, of course, fixed at the moment of its origination".[11]

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[10] David Scott Kastan, "Shakespeare After Theory," pp. 206-24 in Peter C. Herman (ed.), *Opening the Borders: Inclusivity in Early Modern Studies: essays in Honour of James V. Mirollo* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999), p. 213, p. 215, p. 214.

[11] Kastan, p. 214, p. 219, p. 219.

From Stephen Greenblatt's seminal *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* onward,[12] New Historicists have been united, if by nothing else, in the desire to contextualize literature. Their project has been described as an attempt to "complement more traditional types of historicist criticism by adding to its habitual techniques a further set of investigative tools drawn from cultural and social studies and from anthropology, thereby "resituat[ing] canonical literary texts among the multiple forms of writing, and in relation to the non-discursive practices and institutions, of the social formation in which those texts have been produced".[13] Moreover, from its inception New Historicism has been regarded as "...a sustained attempt to read literary texts of the English Renaissance in relationship to other aspects of social formation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries".[14] This concentration on text and context has typically proven fruitful for critics of English Renaissance literature; they have generally found that "a critic with a sensitive ear can excavate the historically placed literary work so that the aesthetics of the text uncover moments of political crisis and struggle".[15] For those who have followed this approach, myself included, it might be said that the "cultural" and the "historical" have helped us to search the "literary" for the "political".

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[12] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980).

[13] Lisa Jardine, "Strains of Renaissance Reading", p. 290 in *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 25(3), 1995, pp. 289-306. Jardine is in turn quoting Louis Montrose, "Renaissance Literary Studies and the Subject of History", in *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 16, 1986, p. 6.

[14] Jean E. Howard, "The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies", in *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol.16, 1986, p. 13, quoted in Lisa Jardine, "Strains of Renaissance Reading", p. 291.

[15] Jardine, p. 292.

Thus, in subscribing to the above approach throughout this thesis, my analysis of the literature of the English Renaissance will concern itself with "context", interpretive "possibility", and "politics". However, in doing so, I aim to avoid some common failings of New Historicist criticism, failings which are by now well recognized and rehearsed, including its tendency toward specious use of history and anecdote and its failure to adequately reflect upon its own assumptions and methodology.[16]

There are a number of challenges inherent in a methodology which seeks to contextualize texts within their culture and history. As Robin Headlam Wells writes, one is forced to attempt "to recover the discourses within which the text is written and of which it forms a part; attempting in other words, the enormously difficult task of showing how a culture quite different from our own produced minds that are quite different from our own".[17] The alternative, that of not attempting this difficult task, is arguably lacklustre, anachronistic, or a-historical.

In an attempt to avoid precisely this alternative, New Historicism has striven to discover and codify a legitimate means of speaking with the past. The central challenge of this project -- the challenge which if resolved leads to the solution to the problem -- is nicely iterated in the following: "Every time we engage with a Shakespeare text, whether we are reading it or producing it or writing about it, we are having (or should be having) a

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[16] Jean E. Howard alerts us to such problems in "The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies", in Richard Wilson and Richard Dutton (eds.), *New Historicism and Renaissance Drama* (London, 1992), p. 220; also, see Scott Kastan, pp. 211-12.

[17] Robin Headlam Wells, "Locating Texts in History", pp. 323-32, in Kishi, Tetsuo, Roger Pringle and Stanley Wells (eds.), *Shakespeare and Cultural Traditions: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress*, Tokyo, 1991 (Newark, University of Delaware Press, 1994), p. 324.

dialogue with the past. But to have a proper dialogue you have got to listen to what the other person is saying. If you do not listen you simply end up with a monologue".[18] What is needed, the statement seems to say, is a dialectical or dialogical relationship between text and reader.

A similar view is advanced in the hermeneutical theory of Hans-Georg Gadamer: "To think historically means, in fact, to perform the transposition that the concepts of the past undergo when we try to think in them. To think historically always involves establishing a connection between these ideas and one's own thinking. To try to eliminate one's own concepts is not only impossible, but manifestly absurd. To interpret means precisely to use one's own preconceptions so that the meaning of the text can really be made to speak for us".[19] This "dialogue" is, then, the act of both asking questions of a text and also learning from it.[20] In doing so, the aim is to avoid the extremes of interpretation which would see us either settling on the idea that the text contains a singular and objective "truth" that must be found, or, alternatively, subscribing to the view that the text may be interpreted in a completely subjective manner; that is, we may impose on it any meaning we wish. In either case, according to the philosophy outlined here, such criticism constitutes a "monologue", rather than the dialogue we should aim for. What "dialogue" with the text aims to prevent are the twin traps of "false objectivism" and its equally objectionable opposite, "extreme

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[18] Headlam Wells, p. 326.

[19] From Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1979; translation of *Wahrheit and Methode* (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1960)), p. 358 quoted in Iain Wright, "History, Hermeneutics, Deconstruction," pp. 83-96 in Jeremy Hawthorn (ed.), *Criticism and Critical Theory* (London: Edward Arnold, 1984), p. 94.

[20] Wright, p. 95.

subjectivism".[21] I have attempted to apply the above principles in the writing of this thesis.

As a final point, we might consider the issue of how New Historisicm tackles the issues of genre and text-hierarchy. It would be fair to say that New Historicism is less interested in genre criticism and in text hierarchies than some other approaches. Rather than privileging certain texts, forms, or genres over others as sources of information, New Historicists have tended to argue that the presence of a particular idea in any work -- or indeed in a social occasion -- indicates that the idea was circulating in society at (or around) the time in question. As noted earlier, critics of New Historicism have sometimes found fault with its methodologies; and, indeed, one might find fault with the approach outlined above, especially if it were to be taken to its extreme -- an extreme where textual hierarchies disappear altogether. In this thesis, however, I attempt to take a practical yet cautious approach when studying historical texts and periods and when applying the methodologies (and assumptions) of New Historicism. That is to say, I subscribe to the view that ideas can circulate in a society, and that the presence of a particular idea in a text (any text) implies that this idea was understood by more people in that society than just the author him or herself.

I also take note of the facts that many texts from Renaissance England have been lost to us, that others have come to us from unreliable sources, and also that biographical and historical knowledge of the authors and times respectively is sometimes scant. Accordingly, I do not seek to rely upon genre criticism or rigid text-hierarchies, but rather make use of the assumptions of New Historicism (which assume the validity of information

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[21] Wright, p. 93.

from many sources): with the qualifier that we should consider the *likelihood* that audiences could have been exposed to these different sources. In this schematic one need not always compare drama with drama, poetry with poetry, masque with masque. Rather, one might choose to become more audience-focused and realize that the learned portion of Shakespeare's audience came from the Court, the Inns of Court, the Universities, the City, and the Guilds. These people were exposed to many genres of literature; and certainly, if we consider those who had access to the Court as our primary example, many had the opportunity to experience drama like Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*, or Ben Jonson's masques at Court, to attend plays such as *Henry V* at the public theatre, to see the *Comedy of Errors* and the *Gesta Grayorum* at the Inns of Court, and also to read works like the *Mirror for Magistrates* and other incidental poetry.

One might note here that Elizabethan dramatists, including Shakespeare, performed their works before audiences at Court, at the Inns of Court, and also at the public theatre. Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, for example, was performed on the same stage as the *Gesta Grayorum*, and to the same audience; the Court audience who appreciated the masques of Ben Jonson and others also appreciated (in the same place and in the same season) theatre that had appeared on the public stage. Authors wrote across genres and works from differing genres were performed on the same stages (for example, at the Inns of Court and at the Court itself) and audiences viewed and understood work from numerous genres.

It was even the case that the works themselves could transcend their own genres. The masque the *World Tost at Tennis*, for instance, was written for the Court but proved successful in the public theatre. In contrast, works such as *Old Fortunatus* show evidence of being rewritten for the Court after

initially appearing on the public stage. The conclusions from this are, again appealing to the traditions of New Historicist thought, that we need not be too concerned to compare apples with apples; regardless of whether an idea appears in drama, masque, court performance, a performance at the Inns of Court, in poetry, or in prose we might conclude that it's all fruit as long as it can conceivably have been consumed by the same crowd.

Sporting imagery in Shakespeare

Now we need to return to the argument that in Renaissance literature there is particular imagery -- from sport -- which informs readers' and auditors' interpretations of *Henry V*. It seems appropriate here to begin with an introduction to sporting imagery in Shakespeare. By beginning with Shakespeare, and with sporting imagery in general, we ensure that the more specific argument which follows later in the thesis is grounded and situated in its proper context. We can begin to see how sporting imagery might have functioned, and been received, in the period.

The earliest comprehensive study of imagery in Shakespeare's works is Caroline Spurgeon's *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us* (1952).[22] When it comes to sport, Spurgeon reminds us of the broad range of activities which fell under this rubric: "The images from sport and games form another sure indication of a writer's tastes and individuality. Shakespeare has a great many, chiefly from falconry, shooting with bow and arrow, deer hunting, bird-snaring and fishing, and in games, chiefly

[22] Caroline F. E. Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952; first pub, 1935).

from bowls, football and tennis...".[23] A number of things need noting from this passage: first, that for Spurgeon sport equates with rural pursuits such as hunting and fishing, whereas "games" include ball games such as tennis, bowls and football. In this thesis I am more interested in the metaphorical implications of Spurgeon's "games" than in her "rural pursuits". This is partly because games -- I define them as sports -- have been neglected by literary scholars, whereas the rural sports have not.[24]

Whereas Spurgeon establishes a rigid taxonomy which hives off games from sport, I believe that it is more useful and more correct to collapse all these sorts of activities (and more) into the one category of sport.

We need to be aware that "sport", or "disport", in the Renaissance period was much more broadly defined than it is in the twenty-first century. Whereas our definition might include physical activity, ball games, and athletic pursuits, sport in this earlier period might also include play-going, military practice, dancing, games and other forms of leisure including hunting and rural pursuits. A contemporary of Shakespeare, Randle Cotgrave, in *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611), shows how broadly sport was defined in the period; numerous definitions of sport in Cotgrave's dictionary allude to the fluid nature of its boundaries. Take, for example, *Deduit*: "Delectation, sport, pastime, solace, pleasure, delight"; *Deport*: "Disport, Sport, pastime, recreation, pleasure"; *Esbat*: "Sport, pastime, play, recreation; delight, pleasure, dalliance, ieasting"; the related *S'Esbatre*: "To Sport, play; dally; jeast; passe away the time in mirth, and

[23] Spurgeon, pp. 26-27.

[24] For instance, Edward Berry's *Shakespeare and the Hunt: A Cultural and Social Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Also, Spurgeon has much more to say about rural sport than she does about "games".

recreation". Then there is *Esbanoie*: "pastime, sport, recreation"; and finally *Iouër*: "To play, game, sport; dallie, ieast; recreate, or solace himself, passe away the time; also to act, represent, or counterfeit (as a comedian) the gestures of another". [25]

It has been noted by critics that "The term 'sport' had an impressive range of meanings in the Early Modern period", from pleasant pastime or diversion to athletic exercise, to amorous dalliance,[26] and that drama and literature are in themselves to be considered sport in this period, with contemporary authors such as John Stow, in *A Survey of London* (1598), making no "distinction between sport and theatre as forms of recreation".[27]

Indeed, this is not surprising, given that before 1597 playhouses were, in fact, multipurpose game-houses playing host to such activities as "bull-baiting, bear-baiting, cock-fighting, duelling and wrestling matches, acrobatics and folk-dancing".[28] There was then some historical ambiguity in the usage of the terms "game" and "play": "...until the middle years of the sixteenth century the words 'game' and 'play' tended to be used

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[25] Randle Cotgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (London: 1611) Amsterdam, Theatrum Orbis Terrarum; New York, Da Capo Press, 1971, 1 v. (The English experience, its record in early printed books published in facsimile, no.367) Facsim. of the ed. printed in London by A. Islip in 1611, unpaginated.

[26] Gregory M. Colón Semenza, "Recovering the 'two sorts of sport' in early modern English prose," *Prose Studies: History, Theory, Criticism* (London, 23:3 2000, pp. 1-30) p. 5.

[27] Paul Yachnin, "The Politics of Theatrical Mirth: *A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Mad World My Masters,* and *Measure for Measure,*" in *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 1992, Spring, 43:1 pp. 51-6; p. 56. Critics including Leah S. Marcus and Paul Yachnin have considered the political implications of a theatre that represented itself as a place of "mirth"; See, for example, Leah S. Marcus, *The Politics of Mirth: Jonson, Herrick, Milton, Marvell, and the Defense of the Old Holiday Pastimes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[28] Glynne Wickham, *Early English Stages 1300 to 1600,* vol. 2, 1576 to 1660, part II (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 30.

indiscriminately rather than rationally in respect to both dramatic and non-dramatic recreational activities".[29] Critics such as Charles Edelman have considered -- particularly in relation to the activity of fencing -- the early theatre as an arena in which "...the 'play' of drama and the 'play' of sporting combat" could co-exist.[30] The definition of sport in the period is then somewhat circular as "recreation" itself could be defined variously as "Recreation, pastime, sport, [and] a delightful or pleasant exercise" [31]: all of these terms, then, effectively collapsing into one another.

Having recognized that "sport" and "recreation" were effectively the same, we might turn to Richard Brathwait's *The English Gentleman* (1630); Brathwait's list of sports, or to use his terminology "Recreations", includes country pursuits such as Hunting, Hounds and Fishing; more athletic pursuits such as running, "Wrastling (sic), Leaping, Dancing and many other Recreations of the Sort";[32] ball sports such as "the exercise of the Ball" (handball);[33] military pursuits such as "Fencing", "Iusts" (Jousting), "Tournaments" and "Barriers"; the arts such as "Musique" and "Painting"; and games such as dice-play, and chess.[34] It is evident from the above that sport in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is best thought of as the equivalent of leisure or recreation, or, even, as the "opposite of work".

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[29] Wickham, vol. 2, p. 41.

[30] Charles Edelman, "Shakespeare's 'Brawl Ridiculous'," in *Shakespeare Survey*, 1989, 42, pp. 111-118, p. 114.

[31] Cotgrave, unpaginated.

[32] Richard Brathwait, *The English Gentleman* (London: 1630), reprinted in facsimile as Richard Brathwait, *The English Gentleman* (London: 1630) no. 717, *The English Experience* (Amsterdam: *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, 1975), p. 166.

[33] Brathwait, pp. 166-67.

[34] Brathwait, pp. 167-70.

From the above we see that we need not create too complex a taxonomy of sport, but rather can consider it as a broad collection of pursuits. And so, where "sport" for Spurgeon equates with "country and outdoor life and occupations"[35] and "games and exercises" are defined to include "tennis, football, bowls, fencing, tilting [and] wrestling...", we need not delineate sport in this manner.

Given that it is our intention to focus primarily in this thesis upon how sporting imagery (especially from tennis) informs our readings of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, we might wish to hear what Spurgeon has to say on the subject of sporting imagery in Shakespeare: particularly on how it functions in his works.

Spurgeon considers that, of all games, Shakespeare "knew and liked"[36] bowls best. We might consider such a conclusion unsupportable four centuries after the fact, but nevertheless it is true that Shakespeare, like other Renaissance authors, made great use of the metaphoric potential of bowls, repeatedly utilizing the chief bowling metaphors of the "rub" (an impediment to one's course) and the "bias" (a natural inclination to one side). In *Henry V*, for example, we hear, following Henry's sentencing of the traitors Scroop, Cambridge and Gray: "We doubt not now/ But every rub is smoothed on our way" (II.ii.182-3). And Edward Sharpham went further, writing:

> Why they say the worlde is like a Byas bowle, and

[35] Spurgeon, p. 30.

[36] Spurgeon, p. 27.

> it runnes all on the rich mens sides: others say, tis like a Tennis-ball, and fortune keepes such a Racket with it, as it tosses it in to times hazzard, and that deuoures all...[37]

In Shakespeare, Spurgeon reports, "images from bowls...are about three times as many as from any other game."[38] However, this statistic does not, of itself, indicate that bowls was either best liked by Shakespeare or symbolically privileged over other sports in his work. In fact, if we analyse Shakespeare's usage of bowling imagery we find that in spite of the relatively great number of references, the imagery of bowls tends to manifest itself in one of the two simple metaphors mentioned above: the "bias" and the "rub". Thus whilst references to bowls are common in Shakespeare -- and are often well known as in the case of Hamlet's 'there's the rub' -- the metaphoric range is nevertheless limited to these two.

More interesting than the statistical catalogue of sporting references presented by Spurgeon is her appreciation of how imagery functions in the drama: "There is no question but that the most striking function of the imagery as background and undertone in Shakespeare's art is the part played by recurrent images in raising and sustaining emotion, in providing atmosphere or in emphasizing a theme". Just as "the conception of disease" or of "hidden corruption infecting and destroying a wholesome body" might be seen as an example of the form such recurrent imagery takes in a play such as *Hamlet*, so too Spurgeon recognizes that a number of Shakespeare's works make use of recurrent imagery to strengthen their theme, emotion, or atmosphere. The process is one in which: "...certain

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[37] Edward Sharpham (1576-1608), *Cupids Whirligig. As it hath bene sundry times Acted by the Children of the Kings Majesties Reuels* (London: Imprinted by E. Allde, and are to bee solde by Arthur Johnson [etc.] *1607*) first performed 1607, first published 1607, *Actus Quarti, scena prima*, ln. 68-71.

[38] Spurgeon, p. 27.

groups of images...stand out in each play and immediately attract attention because they are peculiar either in subject, or quantity, or both".[39]

Spurgeon argues that recurrent imagery can be found in "almost every one of Shakespeare's plays", its purpose being to contribute "in various ways to the richness and meaning of the play, and, in some cases, profoundly influencing its effect upon us."[40] Certainly, Shakespeare's contemporaries appreciated the great didactic potential of imagery and figurative language. The cognitive importance of heuristic analogy is explained in the dedicatory epistle to Robert Cawdrey's *A Treasure or Store-House of Similies* (1600):

> ...many times that thing, which cannot bee perceived or understood of Readers of Bookes, and hearers of Sermons, by a simple precept, may yet by a Simultude or plaine example, bee attained unto. So that if any is desirous to compare a thing from the lesse to the greater: Similitudes will helpe him greatly in this behalfe.

Similes then, must be, according to the titlepage of Cawdrey's work, "pleasant, delightful and profitable, for all estates of men". By "making comparisons of things" men are able to:

> beautifie their matter...and (as it were) bravely garnish and decke out their termes, words, or sentences, with tropes, and figurative phrases, metaphors ... comparisons ... and other ornaments of Speech, giving thereby unto their matter, a certain kind of lively gesture, and so consequently, attiring it with light, perspicuity, easinesse, estimation and dignity, stirring up thereby, mens drowsie minds, and awaking slothful negligent, careless, sluggish

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[39] Spurgeon, p. 213; p. 213, p. 214.

[40] Spurgeon, p. 215; p. 215.

> and retchless people, to the consideration and acknowledgement of the truth.[41]

In such a climate it is not surprising that Shakespeare might choose to continue an image or trope throughout a particular dramatic work and, indeed, it can be argued that such an approach constitutes one of the hallmarks of great dramatic art, which requires "an inner continuity...[or]...a mutual cooperation and connection of all parts".[42] It might even be argued that in the work of the great dramatists "apparently insignificant details" tend to reappear at an "important point" in the action, and/or "acquire real meaning with the progress of events."[43] Which is to recognize that: "In Shakespeare, an image often points beyond the scene in which it stands to preceding or following acts; it almost always has reference to the whole of the play".[44] We need to keep this in mind when we consider the imagery of sport in the literature of the period.

Given this viewpoint, we might consider what Spurgeon writes on *Henry V* and on Shakespeare's histories in general; surprisingly, what we find is that Spurgeon's analysis of these plays is, if anything, a little underwhelming: "In the histories as a whole such continuous symbolism as we find is of a very elementary and obvious nature". She continues: "The most constant running metaphor and picture in Shakespeare's mind in the early historical plays as a whole (from *1Henry VI* to *Richard II* inclusive) is that of growth as seen in a garden and orchard, with the deterioration, decay, and destruction

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[41] from Robert Cawdrey, "The Epistle Dedicatorie", from *A Treasure or Store-House of Similies* (London, 1600), unpaginated.

[42] Wolfgang H. Clemen, *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* with a preface by J. Dover Wilson (London: Methuen, 1953; first pub. 1951), p. 6.

[43] Clemen, p. 6.

[44] Clemen, p. 3.

brought about by ignorance and carelessness on the part of the gardener...".[45]

Ironically, Spurgeon recognizes the mechanism by which Shakespeare uses recurrent imagery to strengthen the meaning of his works, and yet misses the striking sporting imagery in *Henry V*, instead concluding that metaphor in the histories was "elementary". Indeed, in missing the importance of sporting imagery in *Henry V*, in particular, Spurgeon misses the opportunity to strengthen the case for the theme of "growth and decay" -- or rise and fall -- which she sees in the histories; for, as we shall see, sport is important in this regard also.

Given that, in the words of Alan C. Dessen, "much has been written from all possible points of view about imagery and symbolism in the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries",[46] one might ask whether it is reasonable to expect that one might uncover a "new" set of images in such a widely studied body of dramatic work?

In answer to this, we might turn to the critic Alastair Fowler, who would argue instead that too little attention has been devoted to Elizabethan imagery and that this lack of attention has resulted in part because critics have found "Elizabethan conceits....less accessible than Metaphysical ones".[47] Paradoxically, it can also be argued that it is the apparent "superficiality" of Elizabethan conceits - the preconception that the conceits

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[45] Spurgeon, p. 215; p. 216; pp. 237-38.

[46] Alan C. Dessen, *Elizabethan Drama and the Viewer's Eye* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), p. 71.

[47] Alastair Fowler, *Conceitful Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1975), p. 87.

of the Elizabethan period are simpler than those of the metaphysical poetry which followed - that may have led critics to "misconstrue the rhetorical functions of Renaissance imagery".[48]

In our case, it is possible to argue that critics such as Caroline Spurgeon who have delved deeply into the imagery of Shakespeare might have fallen into the trap of at once cursorily treating the obvious metaphors (such as garden imagery in the histories) and missing the more difficult metaphors (such as those arising from sport). Fowler goes on to argue, and his argument is borne out when we consider especially the sporting images from tennis, that "So far as sixteenth-century poetry is concerned...the misconception of comparative easiness has proved fatal to appreciation....In the earlier period, wider reliance on familiar metaphors in fact made possible more complex figurative construction".[49] In the sixteenth century then, there is less consistency of metaphor; that is, analogies are less carefully mapped, with multiple correspondences stemming from seemingly simple conceits.[50] What needs to be appreciated, according to Fowler, is that extended or complex metaphor is the stock-in-trade of the sixteenth century poet, and that such "complexity" was eminently "suitable for sustained meditation and large imaginative construction".[51]

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[48] Fowler, p. 89; p. 88. See Fowler's chapter 5 (pp. 87-113) for a broader discussion of metaphor in Renaissance poetry.

[49] Fowler, p. 106

[50] Fowler, p. 109; pp. 109-13

[51] Fowler, p. 113.

When it comes to this thesis and its claim for the importance of sporting imagery in Shakespeare's *Henry V* -- especially sporting imagery from tennis -- we need to ask one further question: even if one accepts that sport (through its imagery) can provide an array of meaning in Renaissance texts, is it reasonable to suggest that such a recently noticed "image cluster" could truly have been operative in the Early Modern period? For the critic Alan C. Dessen, the answer is a qualified yes: "for a major image to be operative in a play...some...introduction is necessary so that the development of the pattern -- the accretion of meaning -- will be recognised by an audience...". Crucially, this introduction to an image might occur in either of two ways: either quantitatively by the sheer weight of reference to the image, or qualitatively, where "a truly important image or motif...[is]...emphasized at crucial or pivotal moments".[52]

Recovering the sporting context of the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare's *Henry V*

It could be argued that when a modern reader thinks of *Henry V*, he/she naturally also thinks of the year 1599 (the year of the play's performance at the Globe). It could also be argued that a reader interested in re-situating *Henry V* in its historical context might wish to make a close study of the goings-on of the year 1599 (or of those years immediately surrounding it). However, whilst there is undoubtedly much value in this sort of approach, it is worth noting that some serious and fundamental complications arise. By choosing the year 1599 as our reference point for Shakespeare's *Henry V*, are we in fact being a little disingenuous with our reading of historical fact? It is true that a *version* of *Henry V*, by Shakespeare, did appear on the stage

[52] Dessen, p. 85; p. 86; p. 87.

in this year, but it is equally true that versions of the Henry V story had been performed possibly as early as the 1570s and the 1580s (in the case of *The Famous Victories*), and certainly in the 1590s (a performance of a play entitled *Henry V* -- probably the Famous Victories -- is recorded in 1595).[53] Also, Shakespeare's own play (the Quarto version) appeared in print in 1600, 1602, and 1619, and the Folio version appeared in 1623, 1632 and onwards.[54]

Thus "Henry V", the dramatic story, is being put in front of audiences (playgoers and/or readers) in different versions from the 1570s to the 1620s and beyond. Might choosing to contextualise the performance of one year -- the year 1599 -- be considered too narrow an approach?

I suggest that the answer to the above question is "yes", and that when attempting to recover the context of the Henry V story one might be better served by considering the context throughout a period stretching from the 1570s to the 1620s. This is a period which covers all contextual bases, from the (possible) first stagings of the *Famous Victories* (a play which, if he did not write it, at least influenced Shakespeare) to the performance of the 1595 *"Harry the Fifth"*, the performance of Shakespeare's 1599 *Henry V*, the subsequent printings of the Quarto text of Shakespeare's play, and the publication of the Folio play in 1623. It is the period, it might be argued, over which the dramatic *Henry V* story fully evolves.

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[53] A new play, entitled *"Harry the Fifth"*, was performed at the Rose on the 30th November 1595 (Henslowe's Diary, i. 27; ii. 177, Harrison, p. 63). Harrison suggests: *"Harry the Fifth* is presumably *The Famous Victories of Henry V"*. G. B. Harrison. *The Elizabethan Journals* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1938) first pub. 1928, p. 344. The work is comprised of three parts, 'An Elizabethan Journal 1590-1594', 'A Second Elizabethan Journal 1595-1598', and 'A Last Elizabethan Journal 1599-1603'. I do not give part numbers when citing from Harrison. The dates of each entry quoted are assumed to be sufficient to direct readers to the appropriate section.

[54] Gary Taylor (ed.), *Henry V*, (Oxford : OUP, 1994), p. 12.

With this in mind, the final three chapters of the thesis constitute an attempt to recover the sporting context of the period as a means to a better understanding of the Henry V story over this extended period.

Thus, where the earlier chapters seek to read outside references to the sport of Court Tennis as context for close readings of the *Henry V* text(s), the three later chapters seek to recover the broader sporting context of the period -- a context which, arguably, would have informed a contemporary reader's or audience's reception of the Henry V story (in its many guises), and arguably must have informed Shakespeare's own thinking as he wrote and interpreted the story for himself.

The thesis in its entirety, then, is concerned with context ; it seeks to recover the sporting context which influenced the authors of the Henry V story (including Shakespeare) and also the auditors and readers of that story. The ultimate aim is to apply that recovered context to better readings of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

CHAPTER 1: *Henry V* and Tennis : Youth and Sport, Sovereignty and War.

The Dramatic Context: *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth*

Prior to Shakespeare's *Henry V* there existed a dramatic work which covered similar territory, and which Shakespeare knew well. This work is the anonymous *The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth* (Quarto, 1598);[55] *The Famous Victories* is a dramatic work in which the sport of tennis features often, and thus a work which deserves some attention as we begin the project of recovering the sporting context of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

The exact provenance of *The Famous Victories* is unknown and it has been argued that it may even have been performed "Sometime before 1588" by Queen Elizabeth's men, and possibly performed as early as 1574. Regardless of the date of its first performance, its true relevance lies in the fact that Shakespeare knew it well: "The real importance of *The Famous Victories of Henry V* is in its influence upon Shakespeare ... the general

[55] *The Famous Victories of Henry the fifth* (London: Thomas Creede, 1598) as reprinted in John Nichols (ed.), *Six Old Plays* (London: J. Nichols, 1779).

framework of his trilogy [*1Henry IV*, *2Henry IV*, and *Henry V*]...Shakespeare found in the crude materials of *The Famous Victories*".[56]

In *The Famous Victories* the references to the sport of tennis are not confined to the scene in which the gift of the balls is presented. Rather, tennis becomes emblematic of the war between France and England and is referred to at key points in the play. Let us begin our discussion of the role of tennis in *The Famous Victories* at the point where tennis is introduced in the work; that is, with the sequence involving the French ambassador's embassy to the English court.

The sequence in which the gift is given begins:

> And it please your Majesty, my Lord Prince Dolphin greets you well with this present.
> He delivereth [a carpet and] a tun of tennis balls. (Sc. ix, ll.100-3)

In this play the Archbishop explains the meaning of the gift at Henry's prompting, reluctantly declaring:

> My Lord hearing of your wildness before your father's death sent you this, my good Lord, meaning that you are more fitter for a tennis court than a field, and more fitter for a carpet than the camp. (Sc. ix, ll.111-13)

This explication is similar to that given in Shakespeare's work, and Henry's reply is also similar in both plays:

> My Lord Prince Dolphin is very pleasant with me! But tell him that instead of balls of leather we will toss him balls of brass and iron -- yea, such balls as never were tossed in France. The proudest tennis

[56] Irving Ribner, *The English History Play in the Age of Shakespeare* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 71; p. 73; p. 74; p. 72.

> court shall rue it! Ay, and thou, Prince of Bourges, shall rue it! Therefore, get thee hence; and tell your message quickly, lest I be there before you. Away, priest: be gone! (Sc. ix, ll.114-19)

Henry transforms the insult by figuring his war as a game of tennis; the tennis balls will be returned as cannonballs. Even after the French ambassador has departed, the identification of tennis and warfare continues:

> Now my lords, to arms, to arms! For I vow by heaven and earth that the proudest Frenchman in all France shall rue the time that ever these tennis balls were sent into England. (Sc. ix, ll.127-29)

When we next hear of the gift of the tennis balls, it is at the French court. The Archbishop Bourges, who has just finished his account of Henry's progress in France, recounts that the English king has "laid his siege to the garrison-town of Harfleur" (Sc. xi, ll.20-21), and is then asked by the Dauphin, "I pray you, my lord, how did the King of England take my presents?" (Sc. xi, ll.23-24); he replies:

> Truly, my lord, in very ill part. For these your balls of leather he will toss you balls of brass and iron. Trust me my lord, I was very afraid of him; he is such a haughty and high-minded prince. He is as fierce as a lion. (Sc. xi, ll.25-28)

This sequence, beginning with reference to Harfleur, centres on Henry's threat to transform the tennis balls to cannon balls, and is nicely rounded out by the entry of a messenger bringing news from Harfleur itself:

> And it please your Majesty, I come from your poor distressed town of Harfleur, which is so beset on every side, if your Majesty do not send present aid the town will be yielded to the English King. (Sc.xi, ll.32-34)

We see from the above that in the *Famous Victories* the siege of Harfleur is closely identified with the sport of tennis. Moreover, reference to tennis in the context of warfare continues as the play progresses.

At the opening of the next scene, we hear from Henry that the town has been won (Sc.xii,ll.1-2). Whilst the King is still at Harfleur, he is bidden by a French Herald to battle with the French; bidden to what will become the Battle of Agincourt. Upon hearing that the Dauphin will be absent from the fight, Henry declares:

> Why, then, he doth me great injury. I thought that he and I should have played at tennis together; therefore I have brought tennis balls for him - but other manner of ones than he sent me. And, herald, tell my Lord Prince Dolphin that I have inured my hands with other kind of weapons than tennis balls ere this time a'day, and that he shall find it, ere it be long. (Sc.xii, ll.28-33)

Again the king identifies his martial pursuit with a game of tennis, in the process again engaging with the Dauphin's earlier insult.

The reiteration, in this play, of the idea that the tennis balls will be returned as cannon balls, and also of the idea that Henry's war is to be figured as a game of tennis, is hardly subtle and provides us with some dramatic context for Shakespeare's later play -- especially given that audiences who saw Shakespeare's play might well have had memories of *The Famous Victories*.

The Broader Literary Context -- Tennis in Renaissance Literature

If we are to appreciate fully the importance of the sport of tennis as metaphor in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, we must first appreciate the pervasiveness of such metaphor in contemporary literature and thought. We must recognize that even brief references to the sport of tennis in the Renaissance drew upon an enormous sporting-literary tradition.

In the following discussion I shall set forth the tradition behind the references to tennis in the literature of the period, and in doing so demonstrate the thematic potential of the sport in Renaissance literature. We shall see how this one sport of tennis, both in and of itself and also as part of a larger taxonomy of ball sports, developed and sustained a set of particularly complex symbolic resonances in a range of sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts.

First, it is necessary to familiarize oneself with the game of tennis at the turn of the seventeenth century if one is to appreciate the references to this sport which so regularly appear in the literature of the time. Why, we might ask, was this one sport so popular as a political metaphor in the seventeenth century, precisely at the time when Shakespeare wrote his *Henry V*? The answer might be found in the works of a number of nineteenth and twentieth-century sporting historians.

Many have sought to trace the history of the sport of tennis, but the three most comprehensive histories of the game of "Real Tennis" are Noel and Clark's *A History of Tennis* (1924), Marshall's *The Annals of Tennis* (1878), and

Gillmeister's *Tennis a Cultural History* (1997).[57] What we find in the accounts of tennis provided by these scholars (both amateur and professional) is that the sport of tennis was an extremely popular one at the turn of the seventeenth century: "it was during the years round about 1600 that the game reached its zenith in Paris. Lippomanno, the Venetian Ambassador, speaks of 1,800 courts in the capital at this time. Similar evidence is given by Dallington, Master of the Charterhouse, who, writing in 1604, says that every chateau had its court and every town its dozens". [58]

Importantly for our present argument, we are told that "in England, during the Tudor and Stuart times, tennis was almost as flourishing as it was in France at the same period...".[59] Furthermore, in England, this popularity was not merely the domain of royalty or aristocracy but transcended class divides: one author recounts that: "...you may commonly see artisans such as hatters and joiners, playing at tennis for a crown, which is not often seen elsewhere, particularly on a working day".[60] And Thomas Dekker also writes of the sport's widespread appeal: "discourse...how often you have sweat in the Tennis-court with that great Lord: for indeede the sweting

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[57] E. B. Noel and J. O. M. Clark, *A History of Tennis.* (Oxford University Press, 1924.), 2 vols., Julian Marshall, *The Annals of Tennis* (London: 1878 reprinted Baltimore: Racquet Sports Information and Services Inc., 1973), and Heiner Gillmeister, *Tennis a Cultural History* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997) originally published in German as *Kulturgeschichte des Tennis* (München: Fink, 1990). Other useful histories include: Morys Aberdare, *The Story of Tennis,* (London: S. Paul, 1959), Albert de Luze, *A History of the Royal Game of Tennis* translated by Richard Hamilton (Kineton: The Roundwood Press, 1979) first published in French as *La Magnifique histoire du jeu de paume* (Bordeaux: Delmas, 1933, copywright, 1932), and Roger Morgan, *Tennis: The Development of the European Ball Game* (Oxford: Ronaldson, 1995).

[58] Noel and Clark, p. 7.

[59] Noel and Clark, p. 7.

[60] Marshall, p. 69, quoting from Maistre Estienne Perlin, writing in 1558 "Description of England and Scotland".

together in Fraunce (I mean the society of Tennis) is a great argument of most deere affection, euen between noblemen and Pesants".[61]

Throughout the Renaissance, in both England and France, the game of tennis, in one form or another, was popular with all classes: "For much of the time [between the ends of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries], both in France and England, it was the pastime of all classes. Nearly all the Kings played, and some of them played well; the Nobles played, and so did the people, and courts multiplied amazingly".[62] And, furthermore, widespread tennis-play amongst the general populace was a commonplace as early as the mid-fifteenth century:

> ...without doubt a rude sort of Tennis was much practised out of doors by the lower classes. One instance will suffice to illustrate this: it is taken from the answers of the Bishop, Dean, and Chapter of Exeter to the Mayor's Articles (1447): Art 5. 'atte which tymes and in especiall in tyme of dyvyne service, ungoodly ruled peple most custumabely yong peple of the saide Comminalte within the said cloistre have exercised unlawfull games as the toppe, penny prykke and most atte tenys, by the which the walles of the saide Cloistre have defowled and the glas wyndowes all to brost, as it openly sheweth, contrarie to all good goostly godenesse, &c.'[63]

Renaissance authors seem to have adopted the subject of tennis with gusto; in addition to the "tennis-related" texts mentioned elsewhere in this thesis, Philip Henslowe's Diary records a work (non-extant) by Thomas Dekker entitled "fortune's tennis" (1600). (The play is recorded

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[61] Thomas Dekker. *The Guls Horn-Booke*, A. B. Grosart (ed.), *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker* vol. 2 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p. 240.

[62] Noel and Clark, p. 4.

[63] Marshall, p. 58.

as "the fortewn tenes", which editors have interpreted as "fortune's tennis".)[64] Also, Henslowe's *Diary* makes reference to a work by Anthony Munday entitled "A Set at Tennis" (non-extant) purchased in 1602. (This is recorded as "the seeat at tenes".)[65] The game (or its imagery) evidently appealed to dramatists at the turn of the seventeenth century.

An important thing for the modern reader to understand is that "tennis" as referred to by Shakespeare and his contemporaries is a vastly different game to the tennis which is widely played today. In fact, modern tennis is a relatively recent game, having its origins in the nineteenth century. The game spoken of in *Henry V*, however, has largely disappeared and is now played at only a handful of places around the world. Even its title has been subsumed by the modern game (which is, strictly speaking, lawn tennis). The older form of the game now goes under the various titles of Court Tennis, Real Tennis, and Royal Tennis,[66] the various adjectives having been added to distinguish the game from its more popular offspring. The decline of Court Tennis as a sport can be attributed to both its complexity and its expense. Both expense and complexity might be traced primarily to the nature of the court needed to play in (but also partially to the type of ball needed). Whereas the modern court is little more than an empty open-air rectangular playing space, the Court Tennis court is a walled enclosure, often roofed, which contains within it a number of specific architectural features. Sports historians have surmised that the court probably had its origins in the monastic courtyards of twelfth-century Europe (possibly

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[64] *Henslowe's Diary*, London, 1904, vol. 1, p. 124, vol. 2, p. 215

[65] Henslowe, p. 172, vol. 2, p. 225

[66] These names represent those used in America, Britain, and Australia respectively.

France), and thus these historians can explain the presence of features such as a sloping roof which extends down one side of the court (the tambour) and various carefully placed openings (including the hazard). In short, the Court tennis court is more akin to a building than to a flat open space, and thus such tennis courts are expensive to build.

The complexity of such a playing space adds remarkably to the interest of the game and results in the creation of a plethora of unique terms for various aspects of the court and tennis-play. We can have confidence that early modern audiences understood this terminology, both because we know that the game was extremely popular at this time and because contemporary accounts of the game exist in literature and other texts of the time.

The great potential for metaphor from tennis can, then, be partly explained by the sport's pervasiveness and popularity in the period. However, there is perhaps more to the picture than this alone. If we look, again, to Randle Cotgrave's Dictionary of 1611, we find that tennis, because of its very nature, was able to supply a particularly complex set of significations. Cotgrave, in providing English translations of French words and phrases, explicitly highlights both the literal and metaphorical meaning of the terminology of tennis. Thus, for the French "Jouër à bander & à racler contre" we have the telling: "To bandy against, at Tennis; and (by metaphor) to pursue with all insolence, vigour, extremitie".[67]

Cotgrave's dictionary is an invaluable resource in gauging the relative importance of tennis as a souce of metaphor in the period. Tennis is by far

[67] Cotgrave, unpaginated.

the most commonly mentioned sport in the dictionary and, more significantly, where references in the dictionary to other sports tend to be commonplace or literal, Cotgrave regularly takes the time to explain the metaphorical potential of tennis. For instance, when it comes to bowls Cotgrave restricts himself to the literal definition: "Boule: A Bowle (to play with; or to drinke in.)" and also, "Bouloire: f. A bowling alley"; for Billiards he is content with the following: "Biller: To play at Billiards"; and he simply describes a ball as follows "Balon: m. A little ball; or packe; also, a football, or baloone"; but, when it comes to tennis, the attendant metaphors are commonly elucidated together with the literal translation: "Bricoller. To tosse, or strike a ball sidewayes; to give it a bricke wall, at Tennis; (Hence) also to reele, stagger, or make indentures, in going; and to be violently carried overthwart, or sidewayes; also, to turn short (as a Swallow, &c, does, in flying;) also, to leacher". This would suggest that tennis readily lent itself to metaphor in the period.

Metonymy -- Ball: Orb: Globe

The metaphorical power of tennis, and especially the tennis-ball, in the Early Modern period evidently rested, in part, on the metonymical relationship between the ball and the globe of the Earth - that is, on the purely coincidental, or contiguous, similarities in the external appearances of both. In *Richard II* (3.2.41) the globe of the Earth becomes "...this terrestrial ball"; in *Pericles* (2.1.60) man becomes the "ball" and the world is transformed into a tennis court: "In that vast tennis-court, have made the ball".

Moreover, the globe itself was evidently an often-used and complex symbol, as it might signify not only as the Globe of Earth but also, more specifically, as the "orb of England", as explained by Parry: "the orb of England had been moving awry as a result of Elizabeth's death, but now, with the arrival of King James, England moves in a right and orderly fashion once again".[68] And, indeed, the order and degree of society was presented using the image of the globe as part of James's entrance into London (1604). The New World Arch contained "A great rotating globe" which was " 'fild with all the degrees, and states that are in the land', from the nobleman to the ploughman".[69]

Thus, from the complex symbolic relationship between globe, orb, and ball we might argue that when Shakespeare, for example, describes the royal regalia as "...the sceptre and the ball" in *Henry V* he is in effect transferring a great deal of metaphorical significance from the orb to the ball. That is, in this context the "ball" has assumed the significance of the orb of rule, or even of the terrestrial globe which this orb, in turn, represents. And in fact earlier authors had made use of the same contiguities. For instance, there is a history, in mediaeval literature, of the tennis-ball simultaneously standing for the royal orb and the terrestrial globe. In the Wakefield *Secunda Pastorum*, the shepherd Daw gives the gift of a tennis ball to the infant Christ: "hayll! put furth thy dall! I bryng the bot a ball: have and play with all, And go to the tenys" (II.733-6).[70] The work identifies the ball with the

[68] Graham Parry, The Golden Age Restored: the culture of the Stuart court, 1603-(Manchester: Manchester UP, 1981), p. 15; p. 15

[69] Parry, p. 15; p. 15.

[70] Lauren Lepow, "Daw's Tennis Ball: A Topical Allusion in the *Secunda Pastorum*," in *English Language Notes* vol. 22, No.2, 1984, pp. 5-8, p. 6.

"...orb, emblem of the perfection of God the father and symbol of Christ's sovereignty over the world".[71]

Interestingly, critics have recognized parallels between Daw's gift and that of the Dauphin to Henry V; Lauren Lepow, for instance, notes that "The Shepherd Daw offers a tennis ball as an appropriate gift for a king",[72] but "The audience, remembering the popular story in more detail, has a laugh at Daw's expense. Yet the audience also remembers Henry's response by which the tennis ball is transformed from a stigma into a sign of power and domination".[73]

The same identification and transformation is seen also in the mythology of Alexander the Great, where a ball also comes to signify sovereignty; Alexander is offered the gift of a ball "...wherewith thou mayest play with the boys of thine own age, and not meddle with the business of men".[74] Alexander's response transforms the insult as follows: "As for the round ball, it is a sign that I shall hold the whole world; for the world is round and resembles a sphere exactly".[75] Thus when the regent Alexander holds the ball in hand the significance is clear -- what is signified is sovereignty over the terrestial world. The interest for the modern critic lies in the fact that, if Lepow is right, an identification might be expected to have been recognized between the "orb" and the tennis-ball in *Henry V*.

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[71] Lepow, p. 6.

[72] Lepow, p. 8.

[73] Lepow, p. 8

[74] Ernest A. Wallis Budge (ed.), *The History of Alexander the Great* (Amsterdam: Apa-philo Press, 1976), p. 46.

[75] Budge, p. 49, 50.

The Orb

Since a tennis ball can, in some literature, be transformed into the royal orb, we might wish to consider in more detail the significance of the orb itself.

The significance of the "orb", and a brief account of its history, may be expressed as follows: the orb

> Signifies the world. Surmounted by a cross it signifies Christian dominion over the world
> ...
> The orb as an emblem of monarchy, held in the left hand of the monarch, originally signified dominion over the world. It was first employed by Emperor Augustus, and for him and succeeding Roman emperors its use was not merely empty symbolism, as they were monarchs of the greater part of the civilized world. The orb surmounted by the cross was first used by Constantine, as an indication, doubtless, of the faith by which he ruled the world. The orb of English kings since Edward the Confessor, and of most European kings, is surmounted by the cross.[76]

Alternatively, Randle Holme defines the orb as follows:

> A mound, this is a third ensign of Authority; it is a Globe with a Cross; it hath been in use amongst us since Edward the Confessor, and is placed in the left hand; the Cross denotes his faith, and the Globe his Empire or Rule both by sea and land, as it is said of Justinian, who was the first Emperour that ever had it.[77]

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[76] Arnold Whittick, *Symbols Signs and their Meaning* (London: Leonard Hill, 1960, p. 230.

[77] Randle Holme, *Academy of Armory* (1688) (Menston: The Scolar Press, 1972), p. 39.

In mediaeval and renaissance royal portraiture from Richard II to James I the monarch is often shown in possession of the royal regalia, including the royal orb. This orb, held in the monarch's hand, symbolizes his or her control over the terrestrial world. Similarly, the orb, as a symbol of rule or sovereignty, appears on the royal seals of English monarchs from the time of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066) up to and including that of Elizabeth I. The monarchs are generally shown with orb in one hand and either sword or sceptre in the other.[78] Obviously, the image of the monarch holding orb and sceptre -- as they did at coronation -- was a common one; even appearing, for example, on the obverse side of a medal commemorating Elizabeth's victory over the Spanish Armada.[79] The orb is symbolically the world over which a monarch has sovereignty, and this is something the French nomenclature makes explicitly clear; the orb is labeled "...le monde, meaning the world".[80] This tradition might have implications for a reading of Shakespeare's *Henry V* since, in this context, audiences may well have identified the tennis ball gift with the orb of rule.

The tennis ball looks essentially similar to the orb of rule (as depicted in the portraiture for instance), and this resemblance allows a metaphoric comparison of the two; and, also, since the ball is a sphere it also (through a metonymical relationship) becomes an apt analogue for the sphere of the Earth. We need not delve too deeply into the mechanics of imagery here, but rather we should consider the possibility that the sport of tennis is particularly rich in symbolic significance in the early modern period

[78] Whittick, p. 40.

[79] Whittick, p. 84.

[80] Whittick, p. 231.

precisely because it is able to draw on both metonymy and metaphor to create meaning.[81]

Henry V: Sport, Sovereignty and the Tennis Ball Insult.

Generally, where Renaissance sources mention the tennis ball insult in *Henry V* they emphasize that the intent of the gift is to mock Henry's youth and thus his abilities. Holinshed reports the event as follows:

> Whilest in the Lent season (1414) the king laie at Killingworth, there came to him from Charles, [sc. Lewis] Dauphin of France, certeine ambassadors, that brought with them a barrell of Paris balls; which from their maister they presented to him for a token that was taken in verie ill part, as sent in scorne, to signifie, that it was more meet for the king to passe the time with such childish exercise, than to attempt any worthy exploit....[82]

In Shakespeare's play, Henry's claim to the French dukedoms occasions the following reply from the Dauphin via the ambassadors:

> In answer of which claim the prince our master
> Says that you savour too much of your youth,
> And bids you be advised: there's naught in France
> That can be with a nimble galliard won;
> You cannot revel into dukedoms there.

[81]Jonathan Culler suggests that the difference in the two rhetorical figures lies in the fact that "metaphor [is] based on the perception of an essential similarity" whereas "metonymy [is] based on a merely accidental or contingent connection". Jonathan. D. Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs – Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981) p. 190. For a more extensive consideration of metonymy and metaphor, see Culler, *The Pursuit of Signs,* Ch. 10, pp. 188-209. Also, see Paul De Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979).

[82] [Holinshed iii. 545/1/1.], [Hol. iii. 545/1/9.], as quoted in W. G. Boswell-Stone (ed.), *Shakespeare's Holinshed* (New York: Bejamin Blom, 1966), first published 1896, p. 173.

> He therefore sends you, meeter for your spirit,
> This tun of treasure, and in lieu of this
> Desires you let the dukedoms that you claim
> Hear no more of you. This the Dauphin speaks. (1.2.249-57)

The insult is, in part, targeted at Henry's youth and Henry recognizes it as such:

> ...And we understand him well,
> How he comes o'er us with our wilder days,
> Not measuring what use we made of them. (1.2.266-68)

Indeed youth can be regarded as an important concern of Shakespeare's play, not least because the play clearly sets forth, like a *bildungsroman*, the development of Henry for all to see. At the start of Shakespeare's play Henry is an untried and youthful king (he was twenty-six years of age at the time of his accession)[83] and at the close, after his famous victory, he can be regarded as the absolute model of the Christian Prince.

More than this, however, we find that youth is an issue touched on repeatedly throughout the work. This is true from the very first scene, where Ely and Canterbury discuss their king:

> *Canterbury:* The king is full of grace, and fair regard.
> *Ely:* And a true lover of the holy Church.
> *Canterbury:* The courses of his youth promised it not (1.1.22-24)

Upon his father's death, the Bishops maintain, Henry's youthful wildness, his "addiction...to courses vain...[to] riots, banquets, sports" (1.1.54-56) left him, and he was seemingly miraculously transformed into

a sage ruler. Canterbury exclaims approvingly: "never was such a sudden scholar made" (1.1.32).

Youth is also an issue at the very end of the play. Henry V leaves behind a "child" (less than one year old) to rule at his death. The rule of the young Henry VI was inauspicious to say the least, something the Chorus of Shakespeare's play remarks upon:

> Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crowned king
> Of France and England, did this king succeed,
> Whose state so many had the managing
> That they lost France and made his England bleed,
> Which oft our stage hath shown (5.3.9-13)

It is within this framework, one which sees "youthful" qualities as alien to good government, that the tennis ball gift assumes some extra significance; for the primary insult of the gift is that it implies the king is too young, and is therefore unfit to rule.

The idea that youth and good government are mutually exclusive is expressed particularly clearly in the work of John Lyly. According to Lyly, in a passage which could easily be applied to the young prince Hal of the *Henry IV* plays, tennis ranked alongside a plethora of other pursuits which signified indiscreet, hedonistic, and unruly youth:

> How can he rule well in a common wealth,
> Which knoweth not himselfe in rule to frame?
> ...
> Some teach their youth to pipe, to sing and daunce,
> To hauke, to hunt, to choose and kill their game.
> To winde their horne, and with their horse to praunce,

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83 [illegible] Christopher Allmand (ed.) (London: Methuen, 1992), p. 64.

> To play at tennis, set the lute in frame,
> Run at the ring, and vse such other game:
> Which feats although they be not all vnfit,
> Yet cannot they the marke of vertue hit.[84]

In Lyly's work tennis is listed as one of a number of pursuits which, although not "all vnfit", are considered poor education for those "noble youth" who must rule commonwealths. The passage indicates that such pursuits do not lead to virtue: "Which feats although they be not all unfit,/ Yet cannot they the marke of vertue hit".

We might read the works of Lyly, and others, as arguing that Henry V must banish "childlike rule" in order to be a successful king. What is more, there is a precedent for this in the life of his father, Henry IV. What may have once been well known, but seems to have been forgotten, at least by critics of Shakespeare, is that the issue of "youth" was one integrally tied to the Lancastrian kings. When Henry IV seized the throne from the young Richard II, he pointed to Richard's failure to provide good government as reason enough to depose him from the throne. At the time, the Archbishop of Canterbury mused on the nature of sovereignty, suggesting that with Henry "a man shall reign", whereas Richard's tenure might best be described as the rule of "a child wantoning in foolish stubborn humours".[85] What is most interesting about this is that in the pro-Lancastrian history of events "good government" is explicitly presented as the government of "men",

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[84] John Lyly, "How can he rule well in a common wealth", in R. Warwick Bond (ed.), *The Complete Works of John Lyly*, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), vol. 3, p. 449.

[85] William Cobbett, *Parliamentary History of England, from the Norman Conquest in 1066 to the Year 1803*, 15 vols (London, R. Begshaw, 1806-1813), vol. 1, (from 1066 to 1625), p. 269; p. 269.

whereas, in contrast, Richard's poor government, which had "failed to achieve the gude purpose and the commune profit of the Rewme", is referred to as the government of "children".[86] It is notable that Shakespeare displays an ongoing interest in the distinction between manly and childish rule -- in *2 Henry VI*, for example, he has York exclaim: "Nor shall proud Lancaster usurp my right,/ Nor hold the sceptre in his childish fist" (1.1.239-40).

It is worth considering the Archbishop's words in more detail because they develop the distinction between "manly" and "childish" rule:

> Of the late rulers of this kingdom, or any of them, one might have fitly said that of the apostle (Cor. Xiii.) "I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child". The apostle repeats it thrice, As a child I spake, I understood and thought. As to speech, tis certain that a child is inconstant in speaking, he easily speaks true, and as easily false, is ready in words to promise, but what he promises he presently forgets. Now these are things very inconvenient and dangerous in a king; nor is it possible that any realm shall stand long in happiness where these conditions bear sway. But from such mischiefs a kingdom is freed, whose scepter is swayed by a man.[87]

In contrast to the newly promised strong and manly rule of Henry, Richard's faults, he reportedly confessed, arose "...partly by abuse of corrupt counsellors, partly by error of my youthful judgement".[88] Richard II reportedly confessed that "many times I have shewd myself both less provident and less painful for the benefit of the commonwealth,

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[86] Christopher Allmand (ed. and intro.), *Henry V*, (London: Methuen, 1992), p. 15.

[87] Cobbett, p. 268.

[88] Cobbett, p. 272.

than I should, or might..." and conceded that he acted in a childlike manner: "in many actions more respected the satisfying of my own particular humour, than either justice to some private persons, or the common good of all".[89]

Thus, Henry IV's reign, and the Lancastrian dynasty, intriguingly begins with the banishment of childlike rule, the importance of which was reasserted at the first parliament of Henry IV (Mon. 6th Oct, 1399) where the Archbishop of Canterbury addressed the assembly, stating:

> That this most famous realm, abounding in all felicities, had been long governed by children and young counsellors, and would utterly have been ruined and wasted, had not God sent a wise and discreet man to govern the same, who meant, by God's help, to be governed himself by the wise old heads of the realm....[90]

In light of this fact, the Dauphin's "gift" of tennis balls to the inheritor of this dynasty -- Henry V -- might itself take on another facet: that is, if, as the Dauphin suggests, Henry is but a "boy", more suited to the sport of tennis than to war-making, then the legitimacy of his own kingship must surely come under scrutiny.

If we accept this argument, then Henry's response to the Dauphin's gift becomes crucial. Henry, for his very survival, must distance himself from a sporting trope -- that of tennis -- that is intimately associated with youth and all of its attendant faults. It becomes crucial that Henry

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[89] Cobbett, p. 272; p. 272

[90] Cobbett, p. 250.

transform the insult of the tennis ball gift to his own advantage. And this is what he subsequently does.

Henry V -- Tennis and War

The conflation of tennis and warfare is common in chronicles of the life of Henry V written both before and after Shakespeare's play. In Holinshed, we read that Henry answers the mocking gift immediately, advising the Dauphin's ambassadors "...that yer ought long, he would tosse him some London balles that perchance should shake the walles of the best court in France".[91] And John Taylor's *A Brief Remembrance of All the English Monarchies from the Norman Conquest* (1622) has this to say:

> ...Time can neuer end my endlesse fame,
> Oblivion cannot my braue acts out blot,
> Or make Forgetfulnesse forget my name.
> I plaid all France at Tennise such a game,
> With soaring rackets bandyed bals and foyles.
> And what I plaid for, still I won the same,
> Triumphantly transporting home the spoyles....[92]

Such an identification of "game" and war occurs in "A fifteenth-century letter, purportedly addressed by Henry V to his cousin of France...[which]...thanks the Dauphin, with much jesting, for his gifts and assures him that his mock shall turn to shame, 'for ye wot of right I am

[91] [Holinshed iii. 545/1/1.], [Hol. iii. 545/1/9.] Quoted in W. G. Boswell-Stone (ed.), *Shakespeare's Holinshed* (New York: Bejamin Blom, 1966), first published 1896, p. 173.

[92] John Taylor, "A Brief Remembrance of all English Monarchs from the Norman Conquest 1622".

master of the game'".[93] And, clearly, the importance of the gift struck authors such as William Camden, whose "Remaines of a greater worke concerning Britaine [anon.] 1604/5" contains a section in which the full entry for Henry V is as follows:

> King Henry the fift, when he prepared warres against Fraunce, the Dauphin of Fraunce sent him a present of Paris Balles, in derision: but hee returned for answere, That he would shortly resend him London Balles, which should shake Paris Walles. When King Henry the fift had given that famous overthrowe vnto the French at Agincourt, hee fell downe upon his knees, and commaunded his whole armie to doe the same, saying that verse in the Psalme, Non nobis Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam: Not vnto vs (O Lord) not vs, but vnto thy name give the glorie.[94]

Notably, Camden chooses to emphasize only two aspects of Henry's life: his answer to the Dauphin's insult in sending the mocking gift of the tennis balls, and the King's attribution to God of his victory at Agincourt.

The above examples would suggest that references to tennis in the English Renaissance could be emblematic of Henry's warfare (certainly Camden thought of tennis when he thought of Henry). This, of course, is unsurprising given that Henry, in his reply to the Dauphin's insult, transforms tennis play from an idle game of youth -- the concept of tennis on which the insult depends -- into a symbol of vigorous, masculine warfare. Nor should this transformation be considered too far-fetched, for there was at least one sixteenth century Italian author who thought that such an identification was obvious: "The Ball-Game, as everyone can see for

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[93] Kingsford, p. xliv-v, quoting from Halliwell-Phillips, *Letters of the Kings of England*, i.77.

[94] William Camden, "Remaines of a greater worke concerning Britaine [anon.] 1604/5".

himself, has a strong resemblance to real and mortal battles that are fought between men".[95] In *Henry V*, tennis and war can be similarly conflated.

In Shakespeare's play, as we saw earlier, the gift of tennis balls is given in a manner meant to mock Henry's youth. However, the gift also emphasizes that Henry is fitter for "sport" than war. The Dauphin sends the English King the means to occupy himself in sport at home: "He therefore sends you, meeter for your spirit,/ This tun of treasure..." (1.2.254-55), this being of course the tennis balls. In so doing, he strongly recommends that Henry should not 'sport' in France, but should instead stay home and play.

The Dauphin's position is clear enough, and repeated later in the play: he considers Henry unfit for war, and only suitable for sport. He says of the English preparations for war that they should be regarded as seriously as if:

> ...we heard that England
> Were busied with a Whitsun morris dance.
> For, my good liege, she is so idly kinged,
> Her sceptre so fantastically borne,
> By a vain, giddy, shallow, humorous youth,
> That fear attends her not. (2.4.24-29)

The King considers the gift a "mock" which he intends to "venge me as I may" (1.2.292), and, utilizing this term "mock", relates his upcoming military action to the gift and to tennis:

> And tell the pleasant prince this mock of his
> Hath turned his balls to gun-stones, and his soul

[95] W. W. Kershaw (trans.), *Scaino on Tennis* (London: Strangeways Press, 1951), p. 179. Originally published in Italian in 1555 as *Trattato Del givoco Della Palla Di Messer Antonio Scaino Da Salo, Diviso in Tre Parti.*

> Shall stand sore charged for the wasteful vengeance
> That shall fly with them; for many a thousand widows
> Shall this his mock mock out of their dear husbands,
> Mock mothers from their sons, mock castles down. (1.2.281-86)

The response of Henry V to the Dauphin's gift in Shakespeare's play is to transform the tennis ball into a symbol for his war, through its contiguous resemblance to the cannon ball, which will be the instrument of destruction. Tennis becomes emblematic of Henry's war, with Shakespeare utilizing the emblematic significance of the tennis balls throughout the play. That is, Henry through his reply is able to take a sport widely regarded as "foolish play" (to quote Anthony Munday), a symbol of courtly excess, vanity, and frivolity, and transform it into a symbol of his own power.[96] Henry transforms the boyish pastime of tennis into an apt symbol for war.

Shakespeare emphasizes, and re-emphasizes, the links between this gift and Henry's war, as we shall see in the following discussion, which illustrates, in particular, that the identification between tennis balls and cannon balls is not just local to this scene but runs through Shakespeare's play.

Exeter, in his role as English ambassador, in a parallel of the earlier embassy scene, addresses the Dauphin and speaks of the "bitter mock you sent his majesty" (2.4.123) and also re-invokes Henry's image of the tennis-ball as cannon-ball in his talk of "ordinance":

> He'll call you so hot an answer of it
> That caves and womby vaultages of France
> Shall chide your trespass and return your mock

[96]Anthony Munday, (1560-1633) "The Paine of pleasure, describing in a perfect mirror, the miseries of man to learne a foolish play".

In second accent of his ordinance. (2.4.124-127)

The Dauphin states that "As matching to his youth and vanity,/ I did present him with the Paris balls" (2.4.131-32); Exeter countering: "He'll make your Paris Louvre shake for it,/ Were it the mistress-court of mighty Europe" (2.4.133-34). The implication is that Henry, through his metaphorical game of tennis, will make both royal and tennis courts shake with war - the Louvre was the Royal Palace but also the place of the Royal tennis court.

Supplementing those instances already cited, editors have found other possible allusions to tennis throughout the play. For instance, Andrew Gurr suggests that Henry's reference to the "abounding valour" (4.3.104) of the English before the battle of Agincourt begins might play on the tennis theme.[97] Furthermore, Henry Green contends that there exists an "...instance of Emblem-like delineation, or description...in *King Henry V*".[98] Specifically, Green, and subsequent editors of *Henry V*, have viewed the Dauphin's praise of his horse -- "he bounds from the earth as if his entrails were hairs" (3.8.12,13) -- as a reference to tennis. This has occurred because both horse and ball can be said to "bound" and because tennis balls were filled with hair or wool: a fact commented upon elsewhere in Shakespeare (*Much Ado About Nothing*, 3.2.40-42). Finally, there is also Pistol's question, "Is that a tun of moys?" (4.4.17), which potentially reinvokes the sport of tennis in the very scene which stands in place of any representation of the battle of Agincourt itself.

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[97] Gurr, *King Henry V*, p.169n.

[98] Henry Green, *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers* (London: Trubner and Co., 1870), p. 141.

It will be clear that some of the possible allusions to tennis detailed above are simply that -- possible allusions. Some are difficult to prove definitively. Nevertheless, allusion to tennis through puns or through word-play fits extremely well within a play which emphasizes that one might find meaning through mockeries; a play whose Chorus before Agincourt explicitly asks that an audience judge "...true things by what their mock'ries be". (4.0.53)

The 'Mocking' Gift of Tennis Balls

The term 'mock' itself in Shakespeare's play can also be thought of as a repeated invocation of the sport of tennis. When one thinks of the cannon ball and the tennis ball in *Henry V*, or of the way in which the word 'mock' joins the two and echoes throughout the play, one might do well to consider Puttenham's *Art of Poesie*:

> Ye haue another figure which by his nature we may call the *Rebound*, alluding to the tennis ball which being smitten with the racket reboundes backe againe, and where the last figure before played with two wordes somewhat like, this playeth with one word written all alike but carrying diuers sences as thus.
>
> *The maide that soone married is, soone marred is.*
>
> Or thus better because *married* & *marred* be different in one letter.
>
> *To pray for you euer I cannot refuse,*
> *To pray vpon you I should you much abuse.*[99]

[99] George Puttenham, d. 1590, *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), Book 3, Chapter XIX, p. 173.

The action of the tennis game is seized upon by Puttenham as an appropriate analogue for (and provides the name for) a rhetorical figure where a word (or two words which are almost the same) may carry more than one meaning. The word "mock" in *Henry V* provides a good example.

Henry transforms the Dauphin's insult in such a way that the military ability, and even the masculinity, of the French Prince is brought into question. Similarly, Henry's success at Harfleur occasions a shift in the relationship between the two Princes, and between the English and French. With the English victory, the French come under pressure to prove their own mettle, and again sport is the signifier of weakness; the Dauphin says:

> Our madams mock at us and plainly say
> Our mettle is bred out, and they will give
> Their bodies to the lust of the English youth
> To new-store France with bastard warriors. (3.6.28-31)

Bourbon continues the thought:

> They bid us to the English dancing-schools,
> And teach lavoltas high and swift corantos,
> Saying our grace is only in our heels,
> And that we are most lofty runaways. (3.6.32-35)

From this we understand that it has been Henry's response to the "mock", resulting in the victory of English "pennons painted in the blood of Harfleur" (3.6.49), which has suddenly called into question the martial ability of the French. Henry returns the Dauphin's "mock" with his victory at Harfleur, and we must think of tennis here, since the Dauphin's "mock" was the tennis balls, and also since "mock" is precisely the term Henry utilized earlier when promising to turn the Dauphin's tennis balls to

gunstones. In Shakespeare's play, the description of victory at Harfleur asks us to think of tennis.

Tennis and Success at War -- Having God on Your Side

The idea that his war had divine support was evidently important to Henry, as chroniclers recount:

> Henry...was convinced that he had a divine mission. The great preacher [St. Vincent Ferrier], who travelled through France to denounce the corruption of the time, found himself confronted with a Prince who believed that he was the scourge of God to punish it. It was in the same temper that Henry told his prisoners after Agincourt that his victory was not due to his own prowess, but was the work of God who was wroth for their sins.[100]

The fifteenth-century author John Page evidently believed the same:

> He ys Kyng excellent
> And vnto non othyr obedyent
> That levyth hee in erthe be ryght,
> But only vnto God almyght,
> withyn his owne emperoure,
> And also kyng and conqueroure.[101]

In some respects it is apposite that Henry, desiring to demonstrate that his is a holy war, should figure war as a game of tennis, for tennis surfaces

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[100] Kingsford, pp. xxxv-vi, quoting from *Chron. S. Denys.*

[101] This was expressed in the author's poem on the Siege of Rouen. (Kingsford, p. xxxiv).

elsewhere as a metaphor to describe, first, the relationship between man and God:

> Thou hast me made of matter grosse,
> and brittle substance out of clay:
> Which still is subiect to the crosse,
> a tennis ball for worldlings play;[102]

secondly, the relationship between king and God:

> The world a Tennis-court, the Rackets fates,
> Great Kings are bals, when God will tosse their States.
> To them whom God to doe great things doth chuse,
> He generous mindes, and noble thoughts imparts;[103]

and thirdly, that of kingdom and God:

> God plaies with Kingdomes, as with Tennis-balls,
> Fells some that rise, and raises some that fals:
> Nor policy can prevent, nor secret Fate,
> Where Heaven hath pleas'd to blow upon a State.[104]

Henry, and those who supported his rule, would certainly have wanted to identify the King with the Divine. Christopher Allmand, in his discussion of the mediaeval *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, suggests that one of its primary aims was to strengthen Henry's authority by showing that he "was blessed by

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[102] W. Leighton (d.1616), "An euening Meditation", ll. 25-28, in *The teares or lamentations of a sorrowfull Soule* (1613), London, Printed by Ralph Blower, 1613.

[103] Sir W. Alexander, Earl of Stirling (1567-1640), "Doomes-Day, or The great Day of the Lords Iudgement", ll. 679-82, in L. E. Kastner and H. B. Charlton (eds), *The Poetical Works of Sir William Alexander: Earl of Stirling*, Edinburgh: Printed for The [Scottish Text] Society by William Blackwood & Sons, 1921-1929.

[104] Francis Quarles (1592-1644), "Iob Militant", Section 10, ll. 163-66, in *Divine poems* [1632], London: Printed for John Marriott, 1629.

God..." and therefore, by implication, that his success was divinely ordained.[105]

However, the tennis metaphor is a highly ambiguous one, and in other respects it is used not to align man with God, but instead to show man fallen from grace. The problem, it seems, is that God and his representatives have never quite known what to make of tennis. From the late thirteenth century in France there are records of tennis-play within the monasteries and churches on Easter Day. Indeed, at one stage it became common practice for the student-priests to supply the balls for play. A record from the Acts of the Chapter of St Brieuc, from 1480, details

> an ancient custom...on Easter Day, immediately after the completion of the services, of giving five tennis balls to the Bishop, and three to each of the Cannons and racquets with which to strike them...L'Abbe Cochard, referring to the above customs, states that 'this singular rite was found in many French Churches', and relates how, when interest in the game of tennis increased to such a point that the worthy clerics devoted more attention to it than was deemed advisable, 'in order to safeguard esslesiastical dignity, and, to prevent scandal, this tolerance was placed under canonical restriction'[106]

In an earlier work still, a parson is asked if he can preach, and he answers: "Thocht I preich not, I can play at the caiche [tennis]. I wait thair is nought ane, among zow all, Mair ferilie can play at thr fut-ball; and for the carts, the tabils and the dyse, Aboue all persouns I may beir the pryes".[107] Replies

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[105] Allmand, p. 409, pp. 409-10.

[106] Robert W. Henderson. *Bat Ball and Bishop: The Origin of Ball Games.* (New York: Rockport Press, 1947), pp. 50-51, p. 53; pp. 53-54.

[107] quoted in Sir David Lindsay, *Ane Satyre* (Early English Text Society, orig. ser. 19, London, 1866.

and behaviour such as those above might go some way to explaining why it is that by 1640 Nicholas de Nets could write: "It is forbidden to all cures, beneficiaries, pretres et autres ecclesiastiques in our diocese to frequent the public tennis games, on pain of penalty, for the first offense, and of prison if the offense is repeated".[108]

Marvin Colker writes of a medieval manuscript in which tennis appears, as part of a vision, as one of a list of temptations (or inducements) designed to lure a monk from his order:

> Next the author saw many friends try to remove the monk from his order: tennis balls, a bow and arrows, and chessboards and chess pieces were offered as enticements. The ugliest devil of them all stood in a pulpit with a woman and revealed her naked breast down to the navel.[109]

Similarly, Edward Buckler in his "Profitable and Pious thoughts of Death" juxtaposes religious observance with the games of tennis and chess:

> But see how these fools invent
> To give a sick man content...
> One breaks a jest, another tells a tale...
> (But neither of them pray to God at all)...
> They ask'd him if he pleas'd to take the air...
> Or else to a tennis-court
> Whiter gallants do resort,

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[108] Henderson, p. 54.

[109] Marvin L. Colker, "The Lure of Women, Hunting, Chess, and Tennis: A Vision", pp. 103-05, in *Speculum: A Journal of Medieval Studies* (59) 1984, p. 104. The manuscript text is as follows (orthography modernized slightly): "And aftyrward I sey manye fendys icome for to brynge you out of youre ordyr, *and* some of hem profrede you tenyse ballys *and* some bowe *and* arowys *and* some tablis *and* ches *and* othyr sueche harlotrye. *And* aftyrward I seye a foule deuyl most *and* vglyest of alle stande in a pulpytt, *and* he hadde a womman in hys armys *and* schewede you here nakede brest down to the nawyl..."

Or else play a game at chesse.[110]

Games, including tennis, would seem to be regarded as distractions from religion or as temptations which draw man from God: "Instead of Tennis-Court,/ my morning Exercise shalbe at Saint Antlms: ile leaue Ordinaries,/ and to the ende I may forsweare Dicing and Drabbing".[111] Tennis might be regarded as corrupting for the soul.

In another example, Jerome Wierix's "The engraving of the Christian Warrior" (1580), we see clearly that tennis was one of the earthly temptations capable of drawing the Christian soldier from his "righteous" path. In this engraving the figure of the world (*mundus*) is shown tempting the warrior with money, drink, cards and dice. A tennis racket lies at her feet. The price for succumbing to such temptations is implied in the following description of the work: "Behind...[the warrior]...the Devil aims his arrows, and in front Death prepares his scythe for the inevitable blow. In the background and in advance of his path to the city of rest, Sin awaits to obstruct him, and remorselessly thrusts forth 'the worm of conscience' to his view". In Wierix's work we again see the dangers of tennis play expressed. According to Wierix, the righteous Christian Warrior should avoid such games.[112]

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[110] Edward Buckler (1610-1706), "Profitable and pious thoughts of Death", ll. 162-80, in *Midnights meditations of death* (1646), London: published by E. B., printed by John Macock [etc.], 1646.

[111] Thomas Heywood, d. 1641, "The Second Part of, If you know not me, you know no bodie" (1606), (I.i.133-35), London: Printed for Nathaniell Bulter, 1606.

[112] N. Hill, *The ancient poem of Guillaume de Guileville...compared with the Pilgrim's Progress*, London, 1858, p. 33-4. A facsimile of this work can be found in the Library of the New York Racquet and Tennis Club (NYRTC). The facsimile includes the following, abbreviated, Latin title for the engraving: "Spiritale Xiani Militar Certamen".

Pointedly, it clearly also remained the case that too much tennis-playing was considered detrimental to a country's ability to wage a war: in England statutes such as *39 Edward III* of 1365 were enacted against tennis for precisely this reason:

> In the Close Roll, 39 Edward III., m23 (1365), we find the first restrictive Act passed in England, like so many that were passed in France at various dates, against Tennis and other games. Here, however, there was more show of reason for such prohibitions of sports which tended in no way to improve the military strength of the nation, then a very important object, than in France, where such laws seem to have been almost wholly sumptuary. In England they were only partly so. The purpose of the first Act is clear; it was intended to encourage the practice of archery, and discourage that of "hand-ball, foot-ball, cockfighting, and other vain games", under severe penalties.[113]

Similar statutes were proclaimed and enacted throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A mid-fifteenth century (1456-8) entry in the Town-accounts of the Corporation of Lydd, Kent states: "Proclamations are made against tennis and dice-playing, to induce the youth of the town to turn to bow and arrows and other manlier recreations".[114]

Tennis was also used to figure the opposition between war and peace in the following argument by Ralph Knevet, who, in his "A discourse of Militarie Discipline", writes:

> I praise thy wisdome, and thy prudent care,
> That art in Peace, providing against warre:
> ...Oh what a gracefull qualitie it is,
> To be expert in Martiall properties.

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[113] Marshall, p. 55.

[114] Marshall, p. 58, quoting from the Appendix to the 5th Report on the Historical MSS., pp. 516, 21.

> The Tennis-court, and bowling grounds smooth face
> Compar'd with the Artill'rie yard seeme base.[115]

Renaissance attitudes to tennis might best be regarded as ambiguous. For, whilst tennis was obviously an appropriate game for soldiers, and provided an apposite metaphor for war, too much tennis-playing was considered detrimental to a country's ability to wage a war.

Henry V, War, and Tennis - An Ambiguous Association

Intriguingly, a number of mediaeval works explicitly refer to Henry's exploits at Harfleur as a game of tennis. Heiner Gillmeister, in his *Tennis a Cultural History*, refers to a manuscript of the genre of the Brut chronicles which describes events at Harfleur as just such a game:

> And than the Kinge leyde his ordynaunce vnto the toun, that is for to saye, Gunnes, engynes, Trigettis [catapults] schet and cast vnto the wallis & eke yn the toun, and caste doun both toures and toun, & layde ham vnto the grounde: & there he played at tenys [variants of MSS T and R: "at the T."] with his harde gune stones that were withynne the toune. Whan thai schulde plai, thai songen "welawaye and allas that eny suche tenyes ballis were made", and cursed al tho that warre beganne, & the tyme that thei were born.[116]

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[115] Ralph Knevet, "A discourse of Militarie Discipline" (1600-1671), ll. 203-10, in *The Shorter Poems*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1966).

[116] quoted in Gillmeister, p. 112.

Gillmeister points out that the anonymous author of this work has depicted "the barrage of Harfleur in terms of a medieval tennis match..."[117] and finds another similar identification of tennis with the battle of Harfleur in the early fifteenth-century ballad *The Bataile of Agyncourt*, in which Henry declares:

> My Gonnes schall lye up on thys grene,
> For they schall play with Harflete
> A Game at the tenys, as Y wene.[118]

Nor should we consider it unusual that such an identification is presented here, for a number of other mediaeval works explicitly refer to Henry's exploits at Harfleur as a game of tennis. For instance, John Awdelay wrote the following account:

> ...with tenes hold he ferd ham halle,
> To castelles and setis thei floyn away.
> To Harflete a sege he layd anon,
> And cast a bal unto the towne.[119]

Tennis, then, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was a vitally charged symbol in accounts of the life and deeds of the most Christian of Princes, Henry V. As we see from the examples above, there was an especially strong identification between Tennis and Henry's siege at Harfleur. However, as the following argument will demonstrate, such strong identifications can sometimes be unsettling.

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[117] Gillmeister, p. 112.

[118] quoted in Gillmeister, p. 113.

[119] John Audelay, *The Poems of John Audelay*, No. 39, ll. 17-20. Ella Keats Whiting (ed.), (London: Oxford University Press, 1931; published for the Early Text Society), original series, no. 184, pp. 193-94.

In Henry's speech to the citizens of Harfleur he has fused threats of rape and war; it is perhaps significant that the tennis metaphor is used in a number of Renaissance works, some prior to *Henry V*, to figure a threat to female virginity: "And by my troth my sisters maiden head/ Standes like a game of tennis, if the ball/ Hit into the hole or hazard, farewell all".[120] In another later work, the metaphor is used to describe vicissitudes not far removed from those Henry catalogues in his Harfleur speech:

> All fom the age of ten, to twentie five
> Must suffer Rape, and shall, Stood hell in fight.... 'Twill be excellent,
> Rare, I fat with laughter at the rich conceite,
> Wee'l play at Tennis with their maidenheads,
> Fiftie at a breakfast, shall not give me
> Content.[121]

Taking note of the above, I would argue that in Shakespeare's account of the siege of Harfleur -- which as we shall see has war and rape as its primary concerns -- there is also a thematic identification of tennis with Henry's warfare. Tennis is identified with the siege of Harfleur in earlier works, and is also identified with "rape", and these are the primary concerns of Henry's speech also. Furthermore, sex and war meld in the play in another respect also, since the text of Shakespeare's play suggests that Henry V, as a Christian Prince, should seek peace with France through a marriage with Katherine -- demonstrating the inseparability of sex and the

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[120] Henry Porter, *The Pleasant History of, The Two Angry Women of Abington*, London: William Ferbrand, 1599, ll. 828-30.

[121] Nathaniel Richards, *The Tragedy of Messallina The Roman Emperesse* (1640), 4.i.273-81, London: Printed by Tho. Cotes for Daniel Frere [etc.], 1640.

politics of war, both of which merge in the person of the beseiged Katherine:

> *Henry*: ...And you may, some of you, thank love for my blindness, who cannot see many a fair French city for one fair French maid that stands in my way.
>
> *French King*: Yes, my lord, you see them perspectively, the cities turned into a maid, for they are all girdled with maiden walls that war hath never entered. (5.2.283-8)

From the above one might argue that the literary Henry would not want to be too closely identified with the sport of tennis. And there are other reasons also for Henry to distance himself from tennis. Legal statutes from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries illustrate the dangers that could attend sport. These typically stress that games (and gaming houses) were to be discouraged because they were practised "by ydle & misruled prsons repairing to such places, of the wch Robberies...have ensued".[122] Notably, youth were regarded as particularly susceptible to sport's temptations. Taken to its extreme then, sport could be seen as immoral.

In conclusion, we find in tennis a game which is identified with warfare in a most ambivalent manner. On the one hand, as seen from the Henry V mythology, as well as from the work of John Lyly, tennis is considered a boyish, somewhat idle pastime: a pastime which the Dauphin's gift and the statutes affirm was regarded as ill fitted to the soldier. On the other hand, tennis was also favourably compared to warfare by a number of authors, was a recognized pastime of soldiers, and through Henry V's reported

[122] Marshall, p. 214.

reply to the Dauphin's mock, came to signify a successful military campaign in France.

Chapter 2: Fortune's Tennis Ball

Critics such as Paul Jorgensen have recognized that the relationship between God, Fortune and war is of central importance in Shakespeare's Histories:

> ...one of Shakespeare's first and most formative legacies is that of the relationship of God, Fortune, and war. In the Renaissance, this legacy emphasized the question of how much latitude could be given to human prowess, as opposed to supernatural ordinance, in determining victory or defeat in battle. This legacy was especially crucial for the history plays because in them military victory or defeat is of ultimate importance.[123]

Jorgensen argues that for the Elizabethans the relationship between God, Fortune and war, whilst remaining somewhat unstable, developed in such a way that human agency in war assumed increasing importance; moreover, he argues that Shakespeare's history plays are expressive of this change:

> in the first tetralogy, stratagems were of little avail; Fortune or God, or both, decided the outcome. In the *Henry IV* plays the stratagems were numerous, but their very quantity merely served to emphasise their futility. In *Richard III* there were no stratagems; the successful minister of God arrogated nothing to himself by way of human ingenuity. The second tetralogy demonstrated first, in *Richard II*, the need for a ruler to be militarily vigilant; and, second, in *Henry IV*, that there is no divine sponsorship apparent....[124]

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[123] Jorgensen, p. 222.

[124] Jorgensen, p. 231.

However, Jorgensen finds that *Henry V* does not necessarily fit his model:

> King Henry is surely the most subtly disturbing study in religious warfare that Shakespeare ever created ... Superficially, Henry would seem to be a sharp about-turn in Shakespeare's trend toward less reliance on God and more on man's military tactics...He is Shakespeare's most religious hero, the "mirror of all Christian kings," referring all to God and insisting that his army has won without stratagem (iv.viii.113)...[and yet questions remain as to]...the extent to which human endeavour, despite religious explanation, is actually crucial to Henry's success.[125]

For Jorgensen, the crux of *Henry V* lies in a polarized opposition between divine and human agency, where Henry's military abilities sit uneasily with his strenuous and arrogant appeals to God.[126]

Henry V, in Shakespeare's account, is, if judged solely by his own utterances, a model of Christian kingship, a ruler who takes his counsel from God. The point is evidenced by the King's appeal to the Bishops to "justly and religiously unfold/ Why the law Salic.../ Or should or should not bar us in our claim" (1.2.10-12); the claim being for France. This clearly places the moral responsibility for the King's actions with God's representatives on earth, the Church. Henry's actions in this instance, and in his subsequent endeavours against the French, therefore, are ostensibly guided by God's wishes. Moreover, Henry's piety is reiterated throughout Shakespeare's play, his devotion never more evident than at the moment of his greatest triumph, where he humbly ascribes victory at Agincourt to his God: "Praised be God, and not our strength, for it" (4.7.77).

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[125] Jorgensen, p. 231.

[126] Jorgensen, p. 231.

Despite the above, literary critics are divided when it comes to judging whether the king portrayed in Shakespeare's play is sincere in his religious fervour. In fact, it must be said that most recent criticism suggests that Henry plays at realpolitik to justify his actions. This Machiavellian figure of a king, these critics argue, merely appears pious in order to serve his own political ends. Andrew Gurr, for example, finds it "peculiarly pointed" that the Chorus should, in the final lines of the play, say of Henry, "Fortune made his sword", when Henry has previously insisted that his victory at Agincourt should be solely attributed to God.[127] Indeed it might be argued that there is a crucial tension here; for we are unable to determine the play's stance on war or king without deciding for ourselves the extent to which Henry's victory has come about as a result of his own virtue or conversely has come about through Fortune. At the extremes of each position Henry might be regarded as either a virtuous prince with God firmly on his side, or as a politically astute warmonger who manufactures a holy war to suit his ends whilst trusting entirely to the fortunes of war.

It is not my purpose to suggest that there is a singular or final conclusion to be reached on the virtue of Henry's war, but rather I shall suggest that, given that Fortune so often appears when Renaissance authors speak of Henry, given that Fortune is so closely associated with the symbolism - in particular tennis - associated with the king, and given that both tennis and Fortune have a significant role in the warfare of Shakespeare's play, there is indeed a "peculiar pointedness" to be found in Henry's insistence that God is the sole agent of his success in war. Fortune, and the tennis metaphor that attends it, deserves more scrutiny than it has received to date.

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[127] Gurr, *Henry V*, p. 210n.

With this in mind, I would argue that Jorgensen, in his discussion of *Henry V*, has been unnecessarily reductive in narrowing his focus from the three entities of God, Fortune, and war to a more bi-polar argument concerning divinely inspired versus Machiavellian war-making; indeed, in the following pages I shall argue that the relative influences of God and Fortune on war remain as problematic in *Henry V* as they were in the plays of the first tetralogy.

It is somewhat surprising that Jorgensen dismisses the significance of Fortune in *Henry V*, when he has stressed its importance in the other histories, and also in Renaissance thought in general:

> ...the inherited classical tradition of Fortune was to become a vital beginning for Elizabethan thought on the worth of human resourcefulness in war. The writer who spoke most influentially to Elizabethan dramatists on the subject was Seneca. Lines from his *Phoenissae* (II.625-32) are paraphrased in *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1587):
>
> > Wherefore thinke on the doubtfull state of warres,
> > Where Mars hath sway, he keepes no certayne course.
> > Sometimes he lettes the weaker to prevaile,
> > Sometimes the strronger stoupes: hope, feare, and rage
> > With eyelesse lott rules all, uncertayne good,
> > Most certaine harmes, be his assured happes.[128]

Possibly Jorgensen feels justified in dismissing Fortune in his critique of *Henry V* because, as he argues elsewhere in the article, Fortune itself became somewhat Christianized: a process of assimilation which was, as others recount, not without its difficulties:

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[128] Jorgensen, p. 223.

> The description [of Fortune] is...confused, varying between a picture of the goddess and that merely of a personification of the abstract idea (the gifts which Fortune bestows)....A sign that the problem was for many men unsettled appears in the fact that some writers retained both Fortune and the Christian God, without any precise attempt to reconcile the two conceptions. One of the most influential figures in mediaeval thought, the remarkable Boethius, of whose words echoes are found in literature for a thousand years, sets forth a clear picture of the pagan goddess and, at the same time, obviously worships the Christian God, without showing us exactly how the two may exist together in one universe.[129]

But it was not only Boethius who struggled; late sixteenth-century authors also had their problems incorporating Fortune into the Christian framework, as Jorgensen explains:

> The Christianization of Fortune came about uncertainly, with much confusion. Even so conventional a document as *The Mirror for Magistrates* is unable to find an edifyingly stable relationship for God, fortune, and war.[130]

However, whilst the relationship was clearly unstable, Jorgensen argues that "...a fairly clear assurance prevailed that though Fortune was dangerously potent, God controlled chance".[131] How could this be? Possibly a later author provides us with an answer, for, in practice, we might conclude, there was room for both Fortune and God depending on who one was: "If we aske the undiscerning vulgar, what should be the cause of this disparity in men and their Actions they can give us no other reason but

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[129] Howard R. Patch, *The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature* (New York: Octagon Books, 1967), pp. 17-18.

[130] Jorgensen, p. 223.

[131] Jorgensen, p. 224.

chance. But certainly wee must acknowledge God to be the prime author and cause of all".[132]

The above discussion implies that the issue of Fortune's influence was a somewhat vexed one in mediaeval and Renaissance England. In the following discussion we will consider whether the tennis metaphor, given that it was so widely and so variously used in association with Fortune's influence over the Earth, provides us with some important extra context for reading Shakespeare's work.

Fortune and Tennis seem, somewhat surprisingly, inextricably linked in the literature of the English Renaissance. This chapter attempts to provide the reader with an understanding of Fortune (as the more learned part of Shakespeare's audience would have known it) and also of the place of tennis as an image in a philosophy of thought which incorporated (and sometimes rejected) notions that Fortune was influential in the lives of men.

To illustrate the pervasiveness of Fortune in Renaissance thought, and also its ambiguities, this chapter appeals to popular works such as *The Mirror for Magistrates,* the dramatic work *Old Fortunatus* -- intended for a court audience and written by Thomas Dekker -- and minor poetry and other texts from the period. In doing so it shall be argued that Fortune (and its attendant imagery from the sport of tennis) provides useful context for readings of Shakespeare's *Henry V.*

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[132] T. Forde, *Lusus Fortunae: The Play of Fortune continually Acted by the severall Creatures on the Stage of the World or, A glance at the various mutability, inconstancie, and uncertainty of all earthly things. From a consideration of the present Times,* (London, 1649).

Given that this chapter makes use of works from a number of different genres, and given that its ultimate aim is to provide the context for a better way of reading *Henry V*, then some disussion of methodology is required here (it may also be useful to recall the discussion of New Historicism from the introduction).

Context

It is instructive to remember that certain philosophies -- and debates -- can have a long history. Two hundred years before Shakespeare, for instance, John Gower penned a work, addressed to King Henry IV, which provides a comprehensive argument for the virtues of peace, stating that earthly conquest and glory are ultimately vain -- with even spectacular accomplishments (such as those of the conqueror Alexander), turned to nought at death. Here is the idea that the fortunes of war are uncertain and unknowable, the idea that life in general is a game of chance and risk, and, finally, here, also, sport (notably the sport of tennis) functions as the motif for such an uncertain life.[133]

For our purposes, Gower's work is interesting because its themes are similar to those found, much later, in the extremely popular *Mirror for Magistrates* (editions of the *Mirror* appear in 1563, 1574, 1575, 1578, 1587, and 1609-10).[134] Both works counsel against the desire for worldly

[133] John Gower, (1325?-1408), 'TO KING HENRY THE FOURTH IN PRAISE OF PEACE' (especially, ll. 29-42; 92-101; 281-296) in *The Complete Works* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901).

[134] Lily B. Campbell (ed.) *The Mirror for Magistrates* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1960) first published in 1938 by the Cambridge University Press, pp. 15- 20; p. 35.

possessions, status, honour, and glory (especially as these are often obtained through war). Indeed, both texts can be regarded as functioning in the context of the long-running *de contemptu mundi* philosophy - which, although Christian, was nevertheless problematized by the presence of the pagan goddess Fortuna -- in which the value of earthly success was to be qualified and even questioned. [135]

Of great interest to us, in this present thesis, is the way in which the questioning of worldly success seems to automatically draw in a number of the same issues over time. Thus Gower's early musings on the theme set forth a catalogue of activities which likewise reappear much later in works like the *Mirror*. In these texts, we are asked to question the activities of war and peace, asked to consider ambition, glory, wealth and power, to equate life (and worldly activity) with games, and, finally, to consider the role of Fortune (of luck and chance) in man's general rise and fall (*de casibus*) in life.

In this chapter I argue that interest in such issues existed over a relatively long period of time, and that metaphors from sport (chiefly from the sport of tennis) operated within this tradition, especially where Fortune was concerned.

[135] The philosophy can be seen, for instance, in Christopher Saint German's *The Division Betwene the Spiritualitie and Temporalitie* (London, 1532) published in facsimile by De Capo Press, 1972, Amsterdam, Number 453 of the English Experience Series.

Fortune and Tennis

In this chapter I argue that certain images from sport carry -- over time -- great weight with readers and audiences. In particular, I shall argue that in Renaissance England the appearance of images from the sport of tennis brought into play questions relating to success and failure, to rising, falling and maintaining one's state. In some respects, it might even be argued that tennis, the tennis court, and the tennis ball became an alternative to the wheel of fortune for the Elizabethans and Jacobeans, being equally symbolic of rise fall and stability/instability.

The relationship between Fortune and tennis in Renaissance literature has been recognized by Grover Smith:

> The game of tennis has partly inspired an interesting metaphor that occurs a number of times in works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries...[this usage]...in effect calls Man a tennis-ball, subject to the capricious tosses of Fortune in the tennis-court of the world.[136]

Smith quotes from a number of sources to substantiate the claim. These include "Old Fortunatas" (1600) and "The Lamentable Tragedie of Locrine" (1595). Smith also quotes from a letter from John Donne possibly to Sir Henry Wotton (c.1600): "That Erle of Arundell that last dyed...that tennis ball whom Fortune after tossing and banding brikwald into the hazard".[137]

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[136] Grover Smith in "The Tennis-Ball of Fortune", *Notes and Queries* 1946 CXC, pp. 202-03, p. 202.

[137] quoted in Smith p. 202, from John Donne, "Complete Poetry and Selected Prose", John Hayward (ed.), (London and New York, 1939), p. 442.

Fortune, in Donne's letter, has made the Earl of Arundell her tennis ball, and tossed, bandied, and brikwald him into the hazard. Tennis and Fortune are intimately, symbolically connected -- man *is* Fortune's tennis ball.

Donne's letter -- notably written c.1600 -- implies that Fortune remained a discreet and independent symbolic force in human lives at this time, and indeed that, in some respects it could be argued that Fortune remained the dominant force over man's earthly affairs -- and this despite the Christianization of Fortune which had occurred over previous centuries.

Fortune and Success

Just what role did Fortune play in one's success? If the question was a vexed one in the Renaissance, a question which had, perhaps, no one satisfactory answer, this did not prevent authors from asking it.

Machiavelli, for one, considers the fall of states, and argues that Princes who lose their states should not place the blame on Fortune, but rather on their own 'sloth' in not making provision for change: "...let them not blame Fortune but their own sloth; because they never having thought during the times of quiet, that they could suffer a change (which is the common fault of men, while faire weather lasts, not to provide for the tempest)".[138] The Prince should not trust to others, or to hope, but only to their own selves and their own 'vertues'.[139]

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[138] Nicoli Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Menston: The Scolar Press, 1969), p. 201.

[139] Machiavelli, p. 201, p. 202.

This argument leads Machiavelli further into the debate as to the relative importance of God and Fortune to success in "the affaires of the world". Machiavelli notes that the issue has been the subject of much discussion and disagreement, but he himself forms the view that man has some agency -- not all is to be left to Fortune, or to God, or to an undeterminable mixture of the two. Machiavelli leaves room for human agency; he suggests -- as we saw above -- that man can make provision in order to be ready for the unexpected. In times of change, of "great alteration", whether this change "be governed by chance" or by God, the man who has the foresight to prepare will win out. The successful Prince will oppose Fortune with virtue; whereas, in contrast, "that Prince that relies wholly upon fortune, ruines, as her wheele turnes".[140] We might say, then, that the measure of the state, the measure of the Prince, and the measure of the man, is best seen in times of change. It is how one prepares for, and copes with, change and adversity that matters. The 'vertuous' will prosper, those who trust solely to Fortune will eventually fall. In this debate -- over the relative importance of Fortune and God in the life of men -- one set of images, those from tennis, are repeatedly invoked. In the following section I propose to show that this imagery was both common and ambiguous.

The Debate and the Imagery

Without doubt, as an extract from Robert Aylett's "Five Divine and Moral Meditations..." demonstrates, an enthusiastic debate existed as to whether God or Fortune was ultimately responsible for Man's fate on earth:

[140] Machiavelli, p. 202; p. 202-203; p. 203; p. 203; p. 202; p. 202; p.205.

To fleshes obloquy, some giving way,
Confess the highest Powers govern all,
But that with mortals heer they use to play,
As we at hazzard toss a Tennis-ball:
Some all would have by Chance and Fortune fall;
Some others grant that God doth all incline.[141]

On one side of the discussion authors such as Alexander Ross argued for God's omnipotence, dismissing as "fools" those who subscribed to Fortune:

Though fools in their grosse ignorance
Stile providence
A cruell stepdame, wavering, blinde
Light as the winde,
Which kicks off Princes Sacred Crowns,
And makes then Objects of her frowns.
And from the dunghill raiseth drones,
To sit on thrones;
And flings man like a Tennis-ball,
From wall to wall:
And makes a sport to raise a Clown
To honour, then to kick him down.
Yet we know Providence to be
That piercing eye
Which sees and orders everything
That hath being;
Directing them unto that end
Which God Almighty did intend. [142]

However, other authors regarded Fortune or the other pagan gods as holding sway:

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[141] Robert Aylett (1583-1655?), "Five Divine and Moral Meditations: Of 1. Frugality, 2. Providence, 3. Diligence, 4. Labour and Care, 5. Death", Meditation II, in *Divine And Moral Speculations* (1654), London: Printed by Richard Hodgkinsonne, and are to be sold by Daniel Frere [etc.], 1638, ll. 190-95.

[142] Alexander Ross (1591-1654), "FORTUNA", in *Mel Heliconium* (1642), London: Printed by L. N. and J. F. for William Leak [etc.], 1642, (ll. 1-18).

> The Tennis-ball, when strucken to the ground,
> With Racket, or the gentle Schoole-boies hand,
> With greater force, doth back againe rebound,
> His fate, though senceles Seeming to withstand...
> So when the Gods aboue, have struck vs low,
> (For men as balls, within their handes are said,)
> We chiefly then, Should manly courage show,
> And not for every trifle be afraid:
> For when of Fortune most we stand in feare,
> Then Tyrant-like, she most will domineere.[143]

In this debate, a debate as to whether Fortune or God had most influence over the affairs of man, tennis becomes an important motif for Renaissance authors. What, it might be asked, did authors *do* with such vexing questions and issues? In the following section we undertake a discussion of the *Mirror* in order to better understand how Elizabethan and Jacobean readers (Shakespeare's learned audiences) viewed Fortune.

Fortune and *The Mirror for Magistrates*

The title page of an early edition of the *Mirror* (London, c1555) suggests that its purpose is to warn, through example, of the vices and courses which have in the past led man to destruction, and which should, then, be avoided. To achieve this admirable aim the book purports to tell:

> of all such Princes as
> fell from theyr estates throughe
> the mutability of Fortune since
> the creacion of Adam....[144]

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[143] Henry Peacham, "Sic nos Dÿ", in *Minerva Britanna: Or a Garden of Heroical Deuises, furnished, and adorned with Emblemes and Impresas of sundry natures...* (1612), London: Printed by Edw. Allde, 1624, ll. 1-12.

[144] Campbell, p. 6.

Similarly, the full title of the edition of 1571 reads: "A MYRROUR for Magistrates, Wherein may be seene by examples passed in this realme, with howe greueous plagues, vices are punished in great princes and magistrates, and how frayle and vnstable worldly prosperity is founde, where Fortune seemeth moste highly to fauour".[145]

Within the *Mirror* is expressed the idea that it is desirable to recover the details of history, for knowledge of the past and of the worthiness of one's ancestors "might encourage men to like virtues", and, it has been suggested, "The very title indicates as much, for every apology for history in the period affirmed that history was a glass wherein the present might see and learn the patterns of conduct which had brought happiness or unhappiness to nations and to men in the past." Men were able to learn, vicariously, through history "what they would otherwise have to learn by hard experience".[146]

Evidently, one of the important things man was to learn from the *Mirror* (rather than from hard experience) had to do with the workings and influence of Fortune. It is instructive to give a catalogue of (some of) the references to Fortune in the Mirror. We repeatedly hear of rise and fall; and are told that all whom Fortune

> heaves, she hurleth downe as fast:
> If men to cum would learne by other past,
> ...[They]...might set aside,
> High clymyng, brybyng, murdering, lust, and pryde.[147]

[145] quoted in Campbell, p. 15.

[146] Campbell, p. 48; p. 49; p. 49.

[147] 'The Two Mortimers', ll. 46-49, in Campbell, p. 84.

Fortune is equally dangerous in the following:

> Whose state is stablisht in semyng most sure,
> And so far from daunger of Fortunes blast,
> As by the compass of mans coniecture,
> No brazen pyller maye be fyxte more fast:
> Yet wanting the staye of prudent forecast,
> Whan frowarde Fortune lyst for to frowne,
> Maye in a moment tourney vpsyde downe.[148]

Fortune is a fickle Goddess and a malicious one: "...prosperously doth Fortune forward call/ Those whom she mindes to geue the sorest fall."[149] Often, we hear that one should not trust in earthly success as it is inevitably short-lived:

> ...neyther kinsfolke, ryches, strength, or favour
> Are free from Fortune, but are ay decaying:
> No worldly welth is ought save doubtful labour,
> Mans life in earth is like vnto a tabour:
> Which now to mirth doth mildly men provoke
> And strayt to war, with a more sturdy stroke.[150]

and

> What fooles be we to trust vnto our strength,
> Our wit, our courage, or our noble fame,
> Which time it selfe must nedes deuour at length
> Though froward Fortune could not foyle the same.

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[148] 'Thomas Duke of Gloucester', ll. 1-7, in Campbell, p. 91.

[149] 'Owen Glendower' ll. 90-91 in Campbell, p. 124.

[150] 'Henry, Earl of Northumberland' ll. 2-7, in Campbell, p.132.

> But seing this Goddes gideth al the game,
> Which still to change doth set her onely lust,
> Why toyle we so for thinges so hard to trust.[151]

We see, from the catalogue of references above, that success, wealth and life itself could all be said to lie within the domain of Fortune. It is clear from such a philosophy that one should not trust too much to anything as unsure as worldly achievement or pleasure, as Fortune will inevitably

> both vplyft, and gayn downe cast,
> To shewe thereby the vnsuerty in this life...
> The wheele whurles vp, but strayt it whurleth downe...
> For while I nowe had Fortune at my becke
> Mistrusting I no earthly thing at all,
> Vnwares alas, least looking for a checke,
> She mated me in turning of a ball.[152]

Men will rise, fall, and ultimately die in this changeable world.

The final words of The *Mirror* (those of 'Cardinal Wolsey') emphasize the above, reminding us again not to be surprised when rise is followed by fall as things of the world are always in flux -- they ebb and flow, as it were:

> Men are by hap, and couragemade so bolde:
> They thinke all is, theyr owne, they haue in holde.
> Well, let them say, and thinke what thing they please,
> This weltring world, both flowes and ebs like seas.[153]

Men, says the *Mirror*, will inevitably fall for the baits and gifts of Fortune -- these including worldy successes and pleasures -- but one should

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[151] 'Thomas Earl of Salisbury' ll.1-7, in Campbell, p. 143.

[152] 'Henry, Duke of Buckingham', ll. 10-11; l. 252; ll. 407-10, in Campbell, p. 318; p. 326; p. 332.

[153] 'Cardinal Wolsey', ll. 487-90 in Campbell, p. 511.

understand that all is ultimately futile, as man must inevitably fall; in the story of 'William, Duke of Suffolk' we are told:

> My only life in all poyntes may suffise
> To shewe howe base all baytes of Fortune be,
> Which thaw like yse, through heate of enuies eyes:
> Or vicious dedes which much possessed me.
> Good hap with vices can not long agree,
> Which bring best fortunes to the basest fall,
> And happiest hap to enuy to be thrall.[154]

Fortune is base, good fortune will fail, man will fall; the *Mirror's* counsel is clear. Moreover, those who dispose their wills most to worldly concerns will fall fastest and hardest.

In the above philosophy, one which conflates fortune with worldly pleasures and affairs (with a taste for 'pompes and honors'), the 'baytes of Fortune' are the "folly and plage of those/ Which to the worlde their wretched willes dispose."[155] The message is simply that one must avoid "These worldly pleasures [that] tickle us so oft" and instead "kepe the minde aloft".[156]

The *de casibus* and *de contemptu mundi* themes, as seen above, are common ones in the *Mirror*. Moreover, they must have been well known in the Elizabethan Court, something aptly demonstrated by the contributions to the *Mirror* itself by the Elizabethan poet, soldier, and courtier Thomas

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[154] 'William, Duke of Suffolk' , ll.8-14 in Campbell, p. 162.

[155] 'Jack Cade', ll.41-2, in Campbell, p. 172.

[156] Jack Cade, l. 25; l.23, in Campbell, p. 172.

Churchyard.[157] In 'Shore's Wife' Churchyard describes Fortune as "false, and full of fickle toyes" and recommends that we shun her "whyrling whele".[158] Churchyard's other contribution to the *Mirror*, 'Cardinal Wolsey', asks:

> Yf all bee bace, and of so small a count,
> Why do wee all, in folly so abound?
> Why doe the meane, and mighty seeke to mount,
> Beyonde all hope, where is no surety found,
> And where the wheele, is always turning round?[159]

Pride, pomp, honour, glory, in short earthly ambitions and possessions, are all said to be worthless: "Why, all thinges heare, with time decline they must./ Than all is vaine, so all not worth a flye,/ Yf all shall thinke that all are borne to dye". Why be ambitious for glory (with its attendant trouble and strife), why seek to rise (when one must ultimately fall)? These are Churchyard's questions, and the questions of the *Mirror*. The successes of the Earth are Fortune's gifts; yet when all is said and done, it is "A gamesom worlde" in which we live, where ambition, wealth, and privilege is all too easily lost.[160]

To reiterate, then, the extremely popular *Mirror* encourages one away from worldly ambitions and pleasures (those things which are subject to Fortune and thus lead to fall) and counsels, instead, that one should strive

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[157] Churchyard contributed two pieces to the 1587 edition of the *Mirror*, 'Jane Shore' and 'Cardinal Wolsey' (Campbell, p. 42).Campbell also suggests that Thomas Churchyard's 'The Earl of Murton's Tragedie', which appeared in *Churchyard's Challenge* of 1593, "bears every mark...of having been prepared for the *Mirror*."(p.42)

[158] 'Shore's Wife', l.11; l. 28, Campbell, p. 373.

[159] 'Cardinal Wolsey', ll. 421-25, in Campbell, p. 509.

[160] 'Cardinal Wolsey', ll. 418-20, in Campbell, p. 509; l.196, p. 502; l. 5, p. 496

to be virtuous by avoiding worldly vices -- such as ambition for honour, wealth and power, as well as lust and idleness.

> The noble man that virtue doth imbrace,
> Represseth pryde, and humbleness doth vse,
> By wysedome workes, and rashnes doth refuse:
> His wanton wyl and lust that brydel can,
> In dede is gentil both to God and man.
>
> But where the nobles want both wyt and grace,
> Regard no rede, care not but for theyr lust,
> Oppresse the poore, set wil in reasons place,
> And in their wordes and doomes be found vniust,
> Wealth goeth to wracke tyl all lye in the dust:
> There Fortune frownes, and spite beginth to growe,
> Til high, and lowe, and al be overthrowe. [161]

The *Mirror* clearly has the didactic aim of encouraging and exhorting men to virtue. In the period, acting virtuously included acting for the common good, acting for the good of the State. This is in effect the definition of an Aristotelian State (one which requires its citizens to have an interest in -- and to work for-- the common good).[162] Virtue is needed to triumph over self-interest, which (especially in government) merely perverts things. The mark of virtue for noble youth, says the Blacksmith of the *Mirror*, is knowing good from ill, and upholding right though law:

> Howe can he rule wel in a common welth,
> Whych knoweth not him selfe in rule to frame?
> ...
> Some thinke theyr youth discrete and wisely aught,
> That brag, and boste, and weare their fether brave,
> Can royste, and rowt, both lower, and looke alofte,

[161] 'The Blacksmith', ll. 101-112, in Campbell, p. 406.

[162] Simon Haines, *Poetry and Philosophy from Homer to Rousseau: Romantic Souls, Realist Lives* (Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillian, 2005), p. 48.

Can sweare and stare, and call their felowes knave,
Can pyll and poll, and catche before they crave,
Can carde and dyse, both cogge and foyste at fare,
Play on vnthriftye, til theyr purse be bare.

Some teache theyr youth to pype, to syng, and daunce,
To hauke, to hunt, to choose and kyl theyr game,
To wynde theyr horne, and with theur horse to praunce,
To play at Tenys, set the lute in frame,
Runne at the ring and vse such other game:
Which fetes although they be not all vnfyt,
Yet can no they the marke of vertue hit.[163]

Importantly, virtue, and thus good government, says the *Mirror*, is precisely what the activities quoted above (sporting and other) will not teach. [164] In fact, the message is that working for the common good involves controlling one's passions (be they for sporting pleasures or, indeed, for power or wealth). And, with seven editions of the *Mirror* printed over a forty-year timespan, the message was one with which Shakepseare's learned Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences must have been very familiar.

A question that audiences of the period -- especially those who were familiar with the *Mirror* and the philosophical tradition it represented -- should have been asking themselves was: Is success the product of one's own qualities (one's virtue) or is it the product of one's fortune? This question, as we shall see, proved a difficult one to answer.

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[163] "The Blacksmith", ll. 134-54, in Campbell, pp. 407-08.

[164] In giving this advice the *Mirror* is more in line with a Castiglione than with a Machiavelli of course. And in fact, the introduction of Machiavelli in the sixteenth century confuses things a little. Machiavelli is read as denying the necessity of *virtú* and instead proposing a possibly vicious brand of pragmatic self-interest. (Haines, p. 110) Which, opposes the advice given in the *Mirror*, or by authors such as Castiglione, whose purpose is encourage men toward "true virtú", which will in turn lead to both honour and gain. (Haines, p. 110.)

Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*

Thomas Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*,[165] performed at court in 1599, demonstrates that the question raised by the *Mirror* -- the question of Fortune's influence -- was being actively debated in court circles at the very time Shakespeare's *Henry V* was written. The provenance of *Old Fortunatus* is set forth by Oliphant Smeaton:

> Written, as Fleay conjectures with strong show of reason, about 1590, and produced at that time, the drama must have hit the taste of the theatre-going public, and been frequently played. On February 3, 1596, it was revived at the 'Rose' by the 'Admiral's Men', and on November 9, 1599, was reproduced in an enlarged form as *The Whole History of Fortunatus*.[166]

It is notable that *Old Fortunatus* was "apparently Dekker's earliest complete work, in existence in some form by at least 1596....We know that it was performed at court on December 27, 1599...".[167] This time-line is important, as it shows that Dekker's play predates Shakespeare's *Henry V* slightly, and this suggests that audiences, and playwrights, would have been quite familiar with depictions of Fortune, and with the "ball" motif, at the time *Henry V* was staged. Also, we know that the rise to and fall from power was

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[165] Thomas Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, Oliphant Smeaton (ed.), (London: J. M. Dent, 1904).

[166] Oliphant Smeaton (ed.), *Old Fortunatus*, p. x.

[167] Larry. S. Champion, *Thomas Dekker and the traditions of English Drama* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985), p. 11.

a standard subject of the morality plays, a subject revisited in the stories of characters such as *Doctor Faustus*.[168]

To a large extent, Dekker's play functions as a discussion of the relative powers of Fortune and Virtue. This debate had, of course, a long history, as the following extract from Plutarch's *Moralia* demonstrates:

> Virtue and Fortune, who have often engaged in many great contests, are now engaging each other in the present contest, which is the greatest of all; for in this they are striving for a decision regarding the hegemony of Rome, to determine whose work it is and which of them created such a mighty power. For to her who is victorious this will be no slight testimonial, but rather a defence against accusation. For Virtue is accused of being a fair thing, but unprofitable; Fortune of being a thing inconstant, but good. Virtue's labours, they say, are fruitless, Fortune's gifts untrustworthy. Who, then, will not declare, when Rome shall have been added to the achievements of one of the contestants, either that Virtue is a most profitable thing if she has done such good to good men, or that Good Fortune is a thing most steadfast if she has already preserved for so long a time that which she has bestowed?[169]

Joanna Martindale suggests that one of the things that the governing classes learnt from their humanist education -- garnered from the works of Plutarch and others -- was the "need to rise above Fortune's blows through moral courage in an uncertain world".[170] The idea was oft repeated -- to the point where it was simply codified and abbreviated -- in works including Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*, where Vertue is needed to triumph over Fortune.

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[168] See Sidney R. Homan Jr., "'Doctor Faustus', Dekker's '*Old Fortunatus*', and the Morality Plays", in *Modern Language Quarterly*, Dec., XXVI, pp. 497-505. (1965).

[169] (Frank Cole Babbitt (trans.), *Plutarch's Moralia* (London: William Heinemann, 1936, reprinted 1957), vol. iv, *On the Fortune of the Romans* (*De Fortuna Romanorum*), p. 323.

[170] Joanna Martindale, *English Humanism*: *Wyatt to Cowley* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), p. 44.

This might even constitute one of "the great classical/Renaissance themes". Evidently, it was the "uncertainties" and "hazards" of life at this time which made the theme so popular. One's position in life could easily be upended by "the hazards of war and disease", by the precariousness of patronage and the fact that "changes of ruler could bring about a complete reversal in a man's position".[171] Courtiers were certainly aware of their precarious positions. Elizabethan courtiers (Thomas Churchyard's readership) knew well that Fortune could cast one down or lift one up upon her wheel, and also knew well that the court was a place in which such rising and falling was a commonplace. Moreover, in his 'farewell from the Courte' Churchyard clearly condsiders the Country life a better bet -- the court is too uncertain -- and he uses a sporting metaphor to illustrate his point:

> From Court to Countrey will I goe:
> With mutche ill happ, and losse with all,
> Now maie my boule, to byas fall.
> In alleys smothe, where it maie ronne,
> I see in Court, shines not the Sonne:
> But on a fewe, that Fortune liks...[172]

One would imagine that as Elizabeth's reign continued, courtiers would have become increasingly preoccupied with such things.

And the debate evidently continued in literature such as *Old Fortunatus*. In Dekker's play, Fortune is aligned with Vice and both are placed in

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[171] Martindale, p. 44; p. 44; p. 44.

[172] Churchyard, Thomas, 1520?-1604, 'Churchyardes farewell from the Courte, the seconde yere of the Queenes Maiesties raigne', (ll. 1-2; 88-93) in A Light Bondell of Livly Discourses Called Churchyards Charge (1580), Printed ... by Edwarde Russell.

opposition to Virtue. Moreover, Fortune's train of followers, consisting in part of four ex-kings whom Fortune has deposed, is itself an exemplum of her influence: "Behold, these foure chain'd like Tartarian Slaves,/ These I created Emperours and kings, /And these are now my basest underlings".[173] Dekker's play would seem to demonstrate that the belief remained, at least to some extent, that Fortune had a large influence over human affairs. Importantly, especially for considerations of Henry's character, Dekker's Fortune exerts her influence regardless of her subject's virtue:

> Florish or wither [Vice or Vertue] Fortune cares not which,
> In eithers fall or height our Eminence
> Shines equall to the Sunne: the Queene of chance
> Both vertuous soules and vicious doth advance. (sig. C3v).

This would seem to be at odds with a Fortune controlled by a Christian God; and indeed, far from positing a Fortune who is subservient to God, Dekker's play shows Fortune as powerful, independent, capricious and vindictive. Early in the work Fortune enters with her train; a nymph carries a globe and another Fortune's wheel. Fortune asks:

> Behold you not this Globe, this golden bowle,
> This world is Fortunes ball wherewith she sports,
> Sometimes I strike it up into the ayre,
> And then create I Emperours and Kings:
> Sometimes I spurne it: at which spurne crawles out
> That wild beast multitude: curse on you fooles,
> Tis I that tumble Princes from their thrones,
> And gild false browes with glittering diadems,
> Tis I that tread on neckes of Conquerors,
> And when like Semi-gods they have beene drawne,
> In Ivorie Charriots to the Capitoll...
> I set an Ideots cap on vertues head (sig. A4v).

[173] Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, sig. B1v.

In Dekker's description, the world is notably Fortune's ball, "wherewith she sports": her actions (and the success and failure which follow them) are depicted as purely capricious. This idea of a capricious goddess has similarities with that ennunciated by Fluellen, who explains that Fortune: "is painted plind. And she is painted also with a wheel to signify to you, which is the moral of it, that she is turning and inconstant and mutability and variation". (3.7.25-29)

In Dekker's argument, also, we first see Fortune as the supreme controlling influence over worldly affairs:

> Fortune smiles, cry holyday...fortune frownes, cry wellada,
> her love is heaven, her hate is hell:
> Since heaven and hell obey her power,
> Tremble when her eyes do lowre...When
> She smiles, crie holyday...Sing
> hymnes to fortune's dietie
>
> All: Let us Sing, merrily, merrily, merrily,
> With our song let heaven resound,
> Fortune's hands our heads have
> Crown'd, Let us sing merrily,
> merrily, merrily.[174]

However, in Dekker, just as in the period in general, there is evidently some debate as to Fortune's true influence; as Dekker's work progresses, Vertue gains the ascendancy, as the following invitation to sing makes clear:

> All loudly cry, Vertue the victorie
> Vertue the victorie: for joy of this, those selfe same hymes
> Which you to Fortune sung
> Let them be now in Vertues
> honour rung.[175]

[174] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. A4r.

The hymn proper sets forth Vertue's claims of agency over the affairs of man:

> [the song] Vertue Smiles, crie hollyday,
> Dimples on her cheekes doe dwell,
> Vertue frownes, crie wellada,
> her love is Heaven, her hate is hell.
> Since heaven and hell obey her
> power, Tremble when her eyes
> do lowre, Since heav'n and hell
> her power obey, Where shee smiles,
> crie hollyday. Hollyday with joy
> we crie, And bend, and bend, and
> merily, sing hymnesto Vertues diety,
> Sing hymnes to Vertues diety.[176]

In this version of the hymn, Heaven and Hell are subordinated to Vertue, with Vertue's apotheosis completed in the final lines. In typical masque fashion, it is the exemplary qualities of the monarch -- in this case the paramount virtue of Elizabeth -- which enable a satisfactory resolution, in the religico-moral sense, at the close of Dekker's play. Indeed, as Stephen Orgel points out: "The presence of the monarch at a performance often became...part of the meaning of the play...". Referring specifically to Elizabeth, Orgel states: "Like the king at a masque, she was not merely part of the spectacle but an essential element in its significance".[177]

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[175] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. L2v.

[176] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. L3r.

[177] Stephen Orgel, "Making Greatness Familiar", pp. 41-48, in Stephen Greenblatt (ed.), *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1982), p. 45; p. 45.

After deferring to Elizabeth's almost divine virtue, Vertue triumphs over Fortune and Vice:

> ...in all Countries Vertue is of price,
> In euery kingdome some diuiner brest
> Is more enamord of me then the rest...
>
> Fortune thou art too weake, Vice th'art a foole,
> To fight with me, I suffred you awhile,
> T'ecclips my brightnes, but I now will shine,
> And make you sweare your beautie's base to mine.[178]

However, such a resolution, and victory, is ultimately incomplete - as can be seen from the following passage of repentance, which implies that Fortune's influence remains strong wherever insufficient virtue is present or wherever earthly vanities are overvalued:

> Fortune, forgiue me, I deserue thy hate,
> My selfe have made myselfe a reprobate:
> Vertue, forgiue me, for I have transgrest
> Against thy lawes, my vowes are quite forgot
> And therefore shame is falne to my sinnes lot.
> Riches and knowledge are two gifts diuine.
> They that abuse them both as I have done,
> To shame, to beggerie, to hell must runne.
> O conscience hold thy sting, cease to afflict me.
> Be quicke, tormentors, I desire to die.
> No death is equall to my miserie.
> Cyprus, vaine world, and Vanitie farwell.
> Who builds his heauen on earth, is sure of hell.[179]

The debate as to the relative ascendency of Vertue or Fortune over man's life is settled in some respects at the close of Dekker's play: Vertue will

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[178] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. L2r.

[179] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. K4r.

prevail in the presence of exemplary virtue; Fortune will triumph otherwise.

However, whilst the debate we find in Dekker's work is a common one in the period, this is not to say that Dekker's particular resolution of the problem is representative of seventeenth-century attitudes in general. There were other authors, for example Massinger, who saw things differently:

> *Gal.* Vertue's but a word; Fortune rules all.
> *Mat.* We are her Tennis-balls.[180]

However we might choose to resolve the issue (like Dekker or like Massinger), the above example illustrates that Fortune remained a potent force at the turn of the seventeenth century.

What we have also seen from the above, however, is that, in the argument over Fortune's influence on worldly affairs, one particular motif appears and reappears: that of tennis. There can be no doubt that symbolically tennis was intimately connected with Fortune in Renaissance England - and this is reinforced when we consider that in 1599 a work appears in which the tennis ball motif actually occurs amidst a definition of Fortune. In Vincenzo Cartari's *The Fountaine of Ancient Fiction*, Fortune is described as follows:

> Imperious ruler of the worlds desseignes,
> Ladie of sollace, pleasure, and of paines,
> Who in thy well pleasd humours, kings erecteth,
> And when thou list, them down againe deiecteth:
> Powerfull in all, in few things constant, alluring
> Base men to greatness, though nothing assuring:

[180] Philip Massinger, *The Bashful Lover*, London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley [etc.], 1655), 4.i.78,9.

Those which true vertue truly doe embrace,
Not subiect to the smiles of beauties face,
Nor seating vaine-built hopes on glassie frame,
Of big-swolne titles of thy glorious name,
Thou doest seuerely scourge with uniust rigour,
Shewing in their afflicts thy powerfull vigour.
Like tennis-bals thou beat'st us to and fro,
From fauours to disgrace, from ioy to woe,
From wars to peace, from rule to be commanded,
Till at the length cleane out of sight w'are banded:
When streight fresh bals (cald fauorits) come in place,
Which (being new) looke with a smooth-white face,
And for awhile are pleasing and well-liking,
And gently tost with mild and easie striking,
Till in some humor (wearied with that play)
Some stiffer racket bandies them away,
O Fortune, that thy sacred deitie
Should so consist in such varietie. [181]

Here we have an account of Fortune, contemporaneous with *Henry V*, in which kings are said to be the subjects of Fortune, Fortune is responsible for war and peace, and the lives of men may by bandied about like tennis balls. Cartari's description concludes that Fortune has much influence over human life: "By all which wee may euidently perceiue what sway and power over humane affaires, is ascribed vnto Fortune".[182] Indeed, Fortune is said to be all powerful:

But what thou ...[Fortune]...wilt, must stand, the rest must fall,
All human kings pay tribute to thy might,
And this must rise, when pleases thee to call,
This other perrish in a wofull plight.[183]

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[181] Vincenzo Cartari, *The Fountaine of Ancient Fiction*, London, 1599. Reproduced in facsimile, Amsterdam: *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*: New York: Da Capo Press, 1973, p.Ziij. This work is a translation by Richard Linche from the Italian of *Le imagini, con la spositione de i dei de gli antichi* (1556).

[182] Cartari, p. Ziij, Aa.

[183] Cartari, p. Aa ij.

Notably, it is stated explicitly that kings too are subject to Fortune. However, it is also stated that Fortune has scant regard for virtue, but is "...in few things constant, alluring Base men to greatness, though nothing assuring".[184]

The difficulty faced by Renaissance thinkers when they considered man's fate to be the subject of Fortune alone was a moral one. If man was subject only to a capricious Fortune, one holding no distinction between the virtuous and the vicious, then why should he strive to lead a virtuous life? Robert Gould summarizes the problem:

> Or are we truly what old Plautus calls Us miserable mortals?
> Tennis-Balls, which Fate in sport, without regarding who,
> Does strike away, and still, profusely call for new:
> Cruel! for thus the Wise, the Good, the Brave,
> Are not distinguished from the vilest slave,
> One Common Chance attends 'em all.[185]

Despite the disturbing implications of Gould's words, there seems to have been an acceptance by many authors of Fortune's control over man's earthly life:

> ...we are the blind Idoll Fortune's sport,
> We are her Balls (stufft (ah) how beggerly)
> The world so hazzardfull's her Tennis-court,
> Contents the Cord, Her bandying Rackets be
> Hope and Despair, with these she (wanting eyne)
> Tosse us ofter below than 'bove the Line.[186]

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[184] Cartari, p. Ziij.

[185] Robert Gould, "Damon a Funeral Eclogue: on the much Lamented Hen. Bayntun, Esq.", in *The Works* (1709), ll. 19-25.

[186] Robert Baron (1630-1658), "TVCHESPHAIRA: OR Fortunes Tennis Ball", in *Pocula Castalia*, Printed by W. W. and are to be sold by J. Hardesty, T. Huntington, and T. Jackson [etc.], 1647, ll. 1679-84.

The world is given over to Fortune, and becomes either her tennis court, as above, or, for other authors, her ball:

> Why they say the worlde is like a Byas bowle, and
> it runnes all on the rich mens sides: others say, tis like a
> Tennis-ball, and Fortune keepes such a Racket with it, as it
> tosses it in to times hazzard, and that devoures all....[187]

We have seen in Dekker's *Old Fortunatas* the earth figured as a ball, and seen Fortune in control of man's political fate:

> This world is Fortunes ball wherewith she sports,
> Sometimes I strike it up into the ayre,
> And then create I Emperours and kings:
> Sometimes I spurne it: at which spurne crawles out
> That wild beast multitude: curse on you fooles
> Tis I that tumble Princes from their thrones,
> And gild false browes with glittering diadems.[188]

Clearly, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it had become a commonplace to associate tennis and tennis balls with Fortune.

Fortune's influence extended over the individual:

> Thou Fortune casts me at her heele,
> And lifts you up upon her wheele:
> You aught not ioye in my ill happe...
> Since you did spite, my doynges all, And tosse from me the tennis ball;[189]

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[187] Edward Sharpham (1576-1608), "Cupid's Whirligig As it hath bene sundry times Acted by the Children of the Kings Majesties Revels", London: Imprinted by E. Allde, and are to bee solde by Arthur Johnson [etc.], 1607. First performed 1607, first published 1607, *Actus Quarti, scena prima.* ll. 68-71.

[188] Dekker, *Old Fortunatas*, sig. A4r.

the city:

> But (my dear London) me it shall suffice,
> That North and South, From sunset to the rise,
> Thou art antiquities now standing glorie,...
> Vntill this globy fabrickes finall date;
> For though all cities as in sport and play,
> Like tennis balls by fortune played away...
> Yet thou... art still the happie same;[190]

the state:

> Naples; which Fortune made her Tennis-Court,
> By several Nations held successively
> To place it glorious (no more change to feel)
> In sov'raign Spaniards, who can fix her wheel;[191]

and even the institution of the monarchy, which encompasses many of the above:

> Stephen Earle of Boloign, (th'Earle of Bloys his son)
> From th' Empresse Maud this famous Kingdome won.
> Domesticke, forraigne, dangerous discords,
> 'Twixt factions factions, of the King and's Lords,
> Wars 'twixt the King and th'Empresse for the crown,
> Both tasted Fortunes favovrs, and her frowne,
> Now up, now downe, like balles at Tennis tost,
> Till Stephen gain'd the goale, and th'Empresse lost.
> And after eighteene yeeres were come and gone,

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[189] Thomas Churchyard, "Churchyardes farewell from the Courte, the seconde yere of the Queenes Maiesties raigne", in *A light Bondell of livly discourses called Churchyards Charge* (1580), London: Printed ... by Edwarde Russell, 1566, ll. 1-3, 25-26.

[190] R. Niccols, "London's Artillerie" (1616), London: Printed by B. A. and T. Fawcet for L. Chapman, 1627, ll. 65-76.

[191] Richard Fanshawe (1606-1666), "The Lusiad, or, Portugals Historicall Poem: Written In the Portingall Language By Luis de Camoens; And Now newly put into English by Richard Fanshaw", ll. 484-87, London: Printed for Humphrey Mosely [etc.], 1655, ll. 484-7.

> The King not having any lawfull Sonne,
> He dyed, and chang'd his Kingdome & his strength
> For a small Sepulcher of sixe foot length.[192]

Finally, it is perhaps John Norden in "The Labyrinth of Mans Life" who best expresses Fortune's influence over the human sphere:

> If th'earth were brasse, my tongue a grauing pen,
> I would therein graue fickle states of men
> That rise and fall, that change and alter oft
> From basest clowne to Keysar set aloft.
> Related words are only winde, and dye,
> Letters, transferre them to posteritie.
> My subject sad is mans inconstant lot
> That is to day what yesterday, t'was not.
> No State stands long, but riseth or it fals,
> And best resembles tossed tennis bals.[193]

Politics and Fortune's Ball

A further point to be made in our consideration of the complexities of the Tennis metaphor in English Renaissance literature is that the game of tennis was often used in the context of descriptions of changing political fortunes. Thomas Churchyard, for example, in "The Earl of Murtons Tragedie..."

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[192] John Taylor (1580-1653), "King Stephen. An. Dom. 1135", in *All the Workes*. London: Printed by J. B. for James Boler [etc.], 1630, ll. 1-12.

[193] John Norden, "The labyrinth of Mans Life", London: Printed...for John Budge [etc.], 1614, ll. 71-6.

writes: "I might have turnde, the world in Scotland rounde, Like tennis ball, and thrust myne enemies out".[194]

What is interesting is that whilst the political fate of an individual or state typically becomes the "ball" in such a game, the "players" or agencies behind the game are manifold.

In some sources it is the Church which through the metaphor of tennis is shown as influential over individual or State. One anonymous work states:

> Souls are but Tennis-balls,
> The common sport
> Of the Romantick Cardinals,
> And all the Court;
> About they're bandy'd till that all o'er evil,
> For want of money sends them to the Devil,[195]

whilst Francis Hubert, nearly two decades later, simply asks the question "Doe Kingdomes then serve but for Tennis-balls?/ For holy Church to racket up and downe?".[196] On another occasion the occult is shown to have a similar agency over man:

> Our Spells, Charms, and Incantations,
> Turn you from your lofty Stations.
> We'l clamber to your stately Halls
> And toss you down like Tennis-Balls.[197]

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[194] Thomas Churchyard, "The Earl of Murton's Tragedie", in *Churchyards challenge* (1593), London: Printed ... by Edwarde Russell, 1566, ll. 290-91.

[195] Anon. "Emblem III. The Pope rejoyces in Queen Maries days", in *The Protestants Vade Mecum, Venalia apud Auctorem*, 1608, ll. 20-25.

[196] F. Hubert, (d.1629), "The Life and Death of Edward the Second", in *The Historie of Edward the Second*, London: Printed by A. M. for L. Chapman [etc.], 1631, ll. 3200-01.

[197] Robert Dixon (d. 1688), *Canidia, or the Witches. A Rhapsody. In Five Parts.* London, Printed by S. Roycroft, for Robert Clavell [etc.] *1683*, canto XI, ll. 77-80.

And on yet another, Nature has the agency:

> The Change of things in slender verse I sing,
> A weighty subject, common yet to all:
> From lowest creature to the loftiest thing,
> Nature her workes doth tosse like Tennis ball
> Now rayz'd by force, then downe again by poyze.[198]

The pagan deities most representative of war, Mars and Mercurie, govern man's lot in the following example:

> Where I beneld hotte Mars and Mercurie,
> With Rackets made of Spheares, and Balls of Starres,
> Playing at Tennis for a Tunne of Nectar.
> And that vast gaping of the Firmament,
> Vnder the southerne pole is nothing else,
> But the great hazzard of their Tennis Court,
> The Zodiack is the line. The shooting Starres,
> Are nothing but the Bals they loose at Bandy....[199]

And men themselves, most often lawmakers, monarchs or other lesser nobility, are the agents of the game elsewhere:

> *Par.* Suppose all kingdomes in the world were bals,
> And thou stood'st with a Racket twixt foure walls
> ...how wouldst thou play?
>
> *Acol.* Why, as with bals, bandy 'em all away.
> They gone, play twice as many of the score.
>
> *Par.* A tennis Court of Kings could do no more.[200]

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[198] John Norden (1548-1625?), "To the Right honorable Sir William Howard knight, the Lord Howard of Effingham, Sonne and heyre apparent to the Right Honorable Earle of Nottingham, Lord high Admirall of England", in *Vicissitudo rerum* (1600). London: Printed ... for John Budge [etc.], 1614, ll. 7-11.

[199] Thomas Tomkis, *Lingua: Or The Combat of the Tongue, And the fiue Senses For Superiority. A pleasant Comoedie*, London: Printed by G. Eld, for Simon Waterson, 1607, 2.vi.39-47.

We see in Day's work, and the others above, that wider political fortunes than those of the individual were encompassed by the symbolism of tennis. Indeed, it can be concluded that Renaissance literature made quite substantial use of tennis as a political metaphor; religion, nature, and man himself are all variously portrayed as players influencing human politics in this metaphorical game. It can also be concluded that where tennis is used as a metaphor for political fortune, Fortune itself is commonly cited as the prime agent.

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[200] John Day, *The Parliament of Bees*, pp. 527-606, in Robin Jeffs (intro.) *The Works of John Day* (London: Holland Press, 1963), p. 575. Reprinted from the collected Edition by A. H. Bullen (1881).

Chapter 3: Fortune and Risk in *Henry V*

Henry V and Fortune

In the previous chapter I argued that at the turn of the seventeenth century success could be regarded as a product of one's Virtue, or alternatively as a gift of Fortune. I also argued that Fortune and the sport of Tennis had close literary associations at this time. We might now consider Fortune and Tennis in a closer reading of Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

In this chapter, I begin my discussion of "Fortune" in *Henry V* not with a critique of the Folio *The Life of Henry fift,* (published 1623) but with consideration of the so called "bad Quarto", *The Chronicle History of Henry the fift* (1600).[201] This text proves a useful one to the critic because of both its similarities to and differences from the Folio version.

This Quarto, like other Quarto versions of Shakespeare's works, arguably has its origins in one of three intriguing places: "As with the other so-called 'Bad Quartos,' *The Chronicle History of Henry the Fift* has been interpreted in three ways: as an early draft, later revised by Shakespeare into the Folio text; as an inaccurate documentation, either from observation or memory, of a performance of the Folio text; or as an accurate record of an abridged production of that same text".[202]

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[201] William Shakespeare, *The Chronicle History of Henry the fift, With his battell fought at Agin Court in France. Togither with Auncient Pistoll,* Graham Holderness and Bryan Loughrey (eds and intro.). (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993). Shakespearean Originals: First Editions.

[202] Graham Holderness and Bryan Loughrey (eds and intro), *The Cronicle History of Henry the Fift*, pp. 13-14.

One notable difference between the two works is immediately apparent. In the title of the Quarto Pistol has star billing alongside the King himself; the full title being: *The Cronicle History of Henry the Fift with his battell fought at Agin Court in France. Togither with Auntient Pistoll.* This is somewhat surprising to the reader of the Folio, who might regard Pistol's contribution as comparatively minor, and somewhat out of place in any patriotic history of the heroic Henry V. However, as we well know, and as Andrew Gurr notes in the Cambridge edition of the Folio *Henry V*,

> Given [that there are]...two alternative readings of Henry's character in the play, as patriotic hero or jingoistic bully, and [that a] wealth of evidence...can be used to support either view, it has been suggested that reading the play is an exercise in seeing the same phenomenon as either of two quite different things. Its ambivalence makes it like the exercise in Gestalt psychology where the same outline can seem either a rabbit or a duck, depending on one's preconception of the shape. [203]

Thus the Quarto, by emphasizing in its title both Henry - ostensibly a heroic figure - and Pistol - a comic rogue - seems to be making the critic's job simpler by foregrounding the play's preoccupations with both types of character, heroic and comic.

Another thing that the extended title of the Quarto potentially achieves is to emphasize the "comic" elements of the work. The present day editors of the Quarto argue that the comic preoccupations of the Quarto engender a Henry presented not as "an epic hero" or an awe-inspiring historical character, but as a "gentle gamester". The editors suggest that in the Quarto, Henry is "not so much the epic hero of Agincourt as the good

[203] Gurr, *King Henry V*, pp. x-xi. Gurr is making reference to Norman Rabkin's influential and oft cited work on the subject. Norman Rabkin, "Rabbits, Ducks, and Henry V", in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 3, Summer 1977, pp. 279-96.

fellow of Eastcheap; not the mirror of all Christian kings, but the prince of carnival". Furthermore, the editors suggest that, accordingly, "The cultural differentiation between king and commoners is thus reduced, and the play reconfigures a hierarchical society as a community united in the process of festival".[204]

However, perhaps the most significant implication of the Quarto's extended title, for this present argument, is that it gives emphasis to that character (Pistol) in the play who -- in both Quarto and Folio versions -- has the most to say on the vexed issue of "Fortune". I wish to argue that "Fortune" is an important issue in *Henry V* (both versions), as are the related concepts of chance and risk. Furthermore, I wish to argue that Fortune, chance and risk are all discussed in *Henry V* through the central trope of this thesis -- sport (primarily tennis). That is, if we consider sport in *Henry V*, we find not only that it often brings into the play the concepts of Fortune, risk and chance, noted above, but that such concepts, in turn, have a direct and unmistakable influence on our perceptions of the king. I propose to show that Henry's relationship with "Fortune" is important in our judgment of his actions in the play. Henry might be hero or bully or something in between, and we may best be able to judge this through the presence of Fortune in the play, which itself often surfaces in relation to sport and especially tennis.

Whilst Shakespeare's Henry assiduously avoids any overt mention of Fortune, the issue arises in works from other authors. For example, in stark contrast to Henry's failure to mention the Fortunes of war in Shakespeare's

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[204] (Graham Holderness and Bryan Loughrey (eds. and intro.). *The Cronicle History of Henry the Fift*, p. 26; pp. 24-5; p. 27).

play, Michael Drayton has the King answering the Dauphin's insult extremely tentatively in his *Battle of Agincourt*:

> That answering the Ambassadour, quoth he,
> Thanks for my Balls, to Chales your Soveraigne give,
> And thus assure him, and his sonne from me,
> I'le send him Balls and Rackets if I live
> That they such Racket shall in *Paris* see,
> When over lyne with Bandies I shall drive,
> As that before the Set be fully done,
> France may (perhaps) into the Hazard runne.[205]

This response emphasizes chance and luck and the possibility of failure on a number of occasions, and indeed, war itself in Drayton's work is very much the domain of Fortune. First, Drayton keeps the French consideration of the Fortunes of battle -- especially the passage whereby the French dice for the English prisoners.[206] But, more importantly than this, he adds something notably lacking from Shakespeare's account -- reference to "the Fortunes of war" by the King and English nobility; in contrast, there are a number of instances in Drayton's work where Fortune is connected with war. For example, Drayton reports the slaying of Yorke as follows:

> The Duke of Yorke, who since the fight begun,
> Still in the top of all his Troopes was seene,
> And things wellneere beyond beleefe had done,
> Which of his Fortune, made him overweene,
> Himselfe so farre into the maine doth runne.[207]

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[205] Michael Drayton, *The Battle of Agincourt,* (1627) (menston Scolar Press, 1972), p. 7.

[206] Drayton, p. 29.

[207] (*The Battle of Agincourt,* p. 45.) As well as introducing Fortune into the equation, Drayton also possibly puns on the concept of chance with his reference to the "maine". The maine here equals the battle proper, but also represented a cast of the dice in the game of Hazard. Richard Head and Francis Kirkman, *The English Rogue: Continued in the Life of Meriton Latroon, and Other Extravagants. Comprehending the most Eminent Cheats of Both Sexes. The Fourth Part. With the Illustration of Pictures to every Chapter.* London: Printed for Francis Kirkman [etc.], 1671, Chap. XVI, unpaginated.

In fact, those who recounted the story of famous English endeavours in France were not shy in their use of Fortune:

> ...those brave EDWARDs, Father and the Sonne,
> At Conquer'd *Cressy*, with successful lucke,
> Where first all *France* (as at one game) they wonne...[208]

As mentioned above, it is, in the Quarto *Henry V*, the character of Pistol, the figure co-named with Henry, who has the most to say about Fortune.

One might argue that Henry's faith in God is well expressed in his assertions that his fight is a holy one; and might conclude that for Henry "Fortune" is not an issue of concern:

> ...this lies al within the will of God,
> To whom I do appeal, and in whose name
> Tell you the Dauphin I am coming on
> To venge me as I may, and to put forth
> My rightful hand in a well-hallowed cause. (1.2.289-93)

And such sentiments are again expressed in Henry's plea to the Archbishop: "...take heed how you impawgn our person,/ How you awake our sleeping sword of war./ We charge you in the name of God take heed" (1.2.21-23). Henry's rousing speech to his army at Harfleur also closes with an appeal to God: "...upon this charge/ Cry 'God for Harry, England and Saint George!'" (3.1.33-34). Perhaps most significantly, at the close of the battle for Agincourt Henry attributes victory solely unto God: "Praisèd be God, and not our strength, for it" (4.7.77); and: "...O God, Thy arm was here!/ And not to us, but to Thy arm alone/ Ascribe we all" (4.8.98-100).

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[208] Michael Drayton, *The Battle of Agincourt and the Tragedy of Matilda* (Scolar Press, ...), p. 4.

Henry, like Exeter, and also the Tudor and Stuart monarchs who followed, evidently subscribed to the view that hierarchy, position, and success on Earth were ordained by God. Exeter uses the beehive analogy to discuss order in the commonwealth (although unwittingly subverts it); but the Elizabethans would have been more familiar with the idea of the great chain of being, where everyone had his place and deserved that place because it had been bestowed by God. Thus Henry's repeated appeals to God, and his thanks after the victory over the French, reflect the view that he is God's regent on earth, legitimately undertaking God's business. Most importantly, by offering up his successes in war to God, Henry gains the legitimacy of having his position as king appear divinely ordained. Of course, as the son of Henry Bollingbroke who took the throne from Richard II, to become Henry IV, such legitimacy could be considered of great worth. Another of Henry's actions -- his insistence that "*Non Nobis*" be sung after the victory at Agincourt -- also has the effect of emphasizing the support he claims from God: "'*Non Nobis*' is the Latin title of Psalm 115, which begins, 'Not unto us, O lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the glory...'. This psalm celebrates the defeat of the Egyptian armies and God's deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea ... The miraculous military victory commmorated in the '*Non Nobis*' is the core event of all God's interventions in human history".[209]

The bee-hive analogy sets forth the God-ordained role of each member of society, and yet such a hierarchy, with its king, magistrates, merchants, soldiers, and citizens, seems, if we subscribe to Exeter's view, curiously easy to modify. That is, Exeter's claim that the realm can defend itself with both its king and soldiers absent (presumably others step into the breach) intimates that the defined roles of the hive -- of the commonwealth -- are

[209] Steven Marx, "Holy War in *Henry V*", pp. 85-97, in *Shakespeare Survey*, 1995, v.48, p. 85.

more fluid than the analogy would suggest. In fact, one might argue that Exeter, in counselling the king to go to war with France, is upending the intent of the analogy, which, on the surface of it, would seem to argue the opposite. Indeed, in the Introduction to the Cambridge *Henry V*, Andrew Gurr notes that the parable of the bee-hive, which originates with Erasmus, is in fact misused in a somewhat related way: "The pacifist Erasmus had argued that in the kingdom of the bees the leader alone had no sting, and never left the hive. To him...any attack on a neighbouring kingdom was no better than 'brigandage'". For Erasmus then, the moral is that the king should not leave the realm for the purpose of warfare; if we interrogate Exeter's remarks, we might come to the same conclusion.

However, whilst Henry's faith (in both God and hierarchy) allows him to consider his, and his army's, fate to lie with God, it becomes clear that others - notably Pistol - look to Fortune. Therefore, in such a reading one might regard as ironic the Chorus's description of Henry's humility on his return to England:

> Where that his lords desire him to have borne
> His bruised helmet and his bended sword
> Before him through the city. He forbids it,
> Being free from vainnes and self-glorious pride,
> Giving full trophy, signal and ostent
> Quite from himself to God (5.0.17-22).

As he has done throughout, Henry asserts himself a vassal of God, thus increasing his fame further, and identifying himself and his victory with the divine rather than with Fortune or earthly factors. Indeed, one might argue that Pistol's opinion regarding the relative importance of God and Fortune in warfare is markedly different from Henry's; to illustrate this, we might

consider, for example, the seemingly minor scene immediately following Henry's "Once more unto the breach" oration.

The scene shows Nym, Bardolph, Pistol and the Boy musing on the nature of war. Nym decides that "The knocks are too hot, and for mine own part I have not a case of lives. The humour of it is too hot, that is the very plain-song of it" (3.2.2-4). Pistol's rejoinder picks up on this imagery:

> 'The plain-song' is most just, for humours do abound.
> Knocks go and come, God's vassals drop and die,
> [Sings] And sword and shield,
> In bloody field,
> Doth win immortal fame (3.2.5-9).

In the Cambridge edition of the play, plain-song is glossed as "simple melody, or truth", which is satisfactory in explaining the first utterance of the term in this scene. However, I would argue that it is a recognition of the opposition between "plain-song" and "prick-song" which is crucial in interpreting Pistol's words. Plain-song can also be defined as "improvised music", as opposed to "prick-song" which has been set down, or "pricked", onto paper. Judith Williams points out that Philip Sidney's "The Nightingale" contains just such a "reference to prick-song as opposed to plain-song (music that was 'pricked', ie. written down, as distinct from traditional or improvised music)...".[210]

Thus by referring to war as plain-song, Pistol considers that war is a theatre of improvisation and not something which is planned or set down in advance. Rather, war is a place where humours rule and "knocks come and go". Moreover, it is a place where "God's vassals drop and die". By Pistol's

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[210] Judith Williams (ed.), *A Gallery of Renaissance Poetry* (an in-house publication of The Department of English, University of Tasmania, 1978), vol. 1, p. 43.

account, war is, by inference, Fortune's domain; in the "plain-song" of improvised and capricious war, God's vassals suffer the fortunes or misfortunes common to all -- they drop and die.

That battle was uncertain was understood by all. Authors prior to Shakespeare knew well that war was the domain of fortune:

> For God's sake! For God's sake! Noble Duke, please do say soon that - although it is now discussed in various tongues on each side that hopes for victory in the battle and they all say: "We will win and work for it" - they are bragging foolishly. For it must not be ignored that the outcome of all battles is strange and unknown. For although man proposed it, Fortune disposes it. [...*Car ne doit ester ignore comme estrange, et non cogneue est la fortune de toute bataille. Car quoy que de home soit propose, Fortune y dispose.*], from the *Lament on the Evils of the Civil War* "written the 23rd day of August, in the year of grace 1410".[211]

And in Shakespeare's time, Thomas Churchyard puts it best in *The Siege of Leeth*:

> For battailes are, as brittle as the glas.
> Now conquest seemes, than ouerthrowes appeares:
> Now seemes it good, that after proues starke nought:
> Now is he free, that hapneth in the breares:
> Now men deuise, now all is out of thought:
> Now much is spoke, and litle thinges are wrought,
> This is the course, and custome of the warre
> Where wisedome bids, no man to go to farre.
> ...
> Thus haue you heard, how fortune gan to lowre
> Upon our men, the chaunce of warre is suche
> A man may not, at no time trust it muche.[212]

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[211] Christine de Pizan *The Epistle of the Prison of Human Life with An Epistle to the Queen of France and Lament on the Evils of the Civil War*, edited and translated by Josette A. Wisman, volume 21 Series A Garland Library of Medieval Literature (New York: Garland Publishing, 1984), p.95; p. 93, citing lines 12-18.

[212] Churchyard, Thomas, 1520?-1604, 'THE SIEGE OF Leeth, more aptlie called the schole of warre, (the Lord Gray of Wiltton generall thereof) in the second yeare of the raigne of oure

The message is that Man must understand that war is the domain of fortune, and is ultimately uncertain: 'Suche is the warres, where men both wyn and looes'.

Pistol, by bursting into improvised and spontaneous song, proceeds to aptly illustrate both the above and a further point: which is that, as he sings, virtue is not the factor which wins war: "And sword and shield, In bloody field, Doth win immortal fame". We might further appreciate the scene's moral by taking note of the boy's comments about Pistol's singing: "As duly/ But not as truly/ As bird doth sing on the bough". The boy's own verse points to the fact that Pistol's song was indeed sung off-the-cuff, like the singing of birds, but that his tune was not as sweet. The boy appreciates Pistol's song as "simple melody, or truth", which is another definition of plain-song.[213]

The above emphasis on Fortune in warfare problematizes Henry's apparent argument that one's success proves one's virtue. Where Fortune holds sway, virtue may not ensure success; the just do not always prevail; those who wage the unjust war may win. Understandably, then, since the concept of Fortune implies some arbitrariness in hierarchies and success, King Henry is not likely to be predisposed to accept any mention of such a capricious and dangerous Goddess. In contrast, Pistol understands the vagaries of war, and in fact the seeming arbitrainess of death in battle. It is possible here to gain some impression of the arbitrariness of death: the

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soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth, Anno. 1560', in *The Firste Parte of Churchyardes Chippes* (1575) Printed ... by Edwarde Russell.

[213] Gurr, *King Henry V*, p. 119n.

battle, Nym exclaims, occurs "before God" and yet, ultimately it is His servants who make up the dead. The implication is that in the flurry, or confusion of battle, virtue will not save you. God's providence is not the only factor in play. This certainly fits with the idea that earthly actions, especially warfare, are the domain of Fortune. It also fits with the play's own preoccupations with the risks of war.

Pistol's interest in Fortune is also evident in the Quarto, where he introduces us to the goddess *Fortuna* in ascribing his friend Bardolph's perilous predicament to "...giddy Fortunes fickel wheele,/ That Godes blinde that stands upon the rowling restlesse stone".[214] This introduction to the workings of Fortune, when it comes to the fate of men, is expanded upon by Flewellyn:

> By your patience ancient *Pistoll*,
> Fortune, looke you is painted,
> Plind with a mufler before her eyes,
> To signifie to you, that Fortune is plind:
> And she is moreover painted with a wheele,
> Which is the morall that Fortune is turning,
> And inconstant, and variation; and mutabilities:
> And her fate is fixed at a sphericall stone
> Which roules, and roules, and roules:
> Surely the Poet is make an excellent description of Fortune.
> Fortune looke you is and (sic) excellent morall.[215]

The description given accords with the standard emblematical depictions of *Fortuna*. The goddess advances and crushes men at her whim, with scant regard for justness or virtue.[216] Position, success and greatness are

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[214] Holderness and Loughrey p. 58.

[215] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 58.

[216] There is no doubt that "Emblems" were popular in the Renaissance. The English collections of note were: Samuel Daniel's translation of *Giovio, The Worthy tract of Paulus*

bestowed and then taken away with no reference to individual or collective merit.

Indeed, Pistol himself can be regarded as the primary evidence of this. At the zenith of his fortunes, Pistol is described by Fluellen as "as valient a man as *Marke Anthonie*" -- this largely on the strength of Pistol's own words, which we hear were "as prave words upon the bridge/ As you shall desire to see in a sommers day". Gower, having seen the true Pistol, soon disabuses Fluellen of his opinion: "I remember him now, he is a bawd, a cutpurse".[217] Gower then proceeds to offer some sage advice:

> Why this is a gull, a foole, a rogue that goes to the wars
> Onely to grace himselfe at his returne to London
> ...
> ...you must learn To know such slaunders of this age,
> Or else you may marvellously be mistooke.[218]

Perhaps Gower's words are truer than he knows, for Fluellen has been mistaken as to just how "marvellous" Pistol really is; and herein lies the moral. It appears to be easy to escape, or transcend one's place in the hierarchy. Pistol, by uttering a few well chosen words, is able to convince Flewellyn of his greatness, and Gower recognizes that such deceitful behaviour is commonplace in the age.

Iovius...(London: 1585), Abraham Fraunce's *Insignium, etc.Explicatio* (London, 1588), Andrew Willet's *Sacorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (Cambridge, c. 1592), Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britanna* (London, 1612), Henry Goodyer's *The Mirrour of Maiestie* (London, 1618), Robert Farley's *Kalendarium humanae vitae,* and *Lychnocausia* (both London,1638), Quarles's *Emblems* (1635), Whitney's *Choice of Emblems* (1635), and Whither's *Collection of Emblemes* (London, 1635).

[217] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 57; p. 59; p. 59.

[218] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 59.

If Pistol successfully disguises himself -- raising himself up -- through his use of language (thus calling into question the idea of an ordained and immutable hierarchy) then Henry does the same, albeit in reverse. The king disguises himself in this instance not through language but through appearance, forgoing his regal apparel in favour of more modest attire. Again, it is Pistol who causes us to think of degree and worth; Pistol asks of the disguised king:

> Discus unto me, art thou Gentleman?
> Or art thou common, base, and popeler?[219]

Henry's reply is unimportant. Rather, the questions themselves highlight the lack of obvious "degree" in Henry. Henry, still in disguise, goes on to meet the three soldiers, and again no inherent *virtu* shines through. This is reinforced through the quarrel with Williams, and the subsequent "paying" of the insult -- Williams does not recognize the King as king when he quarrels with him, and later he does not distinguish the man he has quarrelled with from the lesser figure of Flewellyn who now wears the glove in his cap.

Pistol, of whose praises Fluellen has earlier sung so enthusiastically, has, by the play's close, been reduced to the greatest humiliation. Fluellen has forced him to eat his leek -- surely a bawdy pun is intended here -- and also soundly beaten him. Pistol's reaction is to seek an agent for his misfortune; he asks: "Doth Fortune play the huswye with me now?/ Is honour cudgeld from my warlike lines?".[220] The lines are striking, almost parodic, in that they show a certain pathos at some mythical lost "honour", some mythical

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[219] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 63.

[220] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 81.

"warlike lines" which we know Pistol never had in reality -- although perhaps briefly in appearance. However, in considering himself at the mercy of Fortune after his beating and humiliation, Pistol is perhaps expressing the view that honour is itself only to be had when one has good Fortune. And in fact he then demonstrates with his next lines the absolute depths to which he has fallen, leaving us in no doubt as to his position on Fortune's wheel, and correspondingly also leaving us in no doubt as to the "honour" available, or accessible to those in such a position:

> Well *France* farwell, newes have I certainly
> That Doll is sicke. One mallydie of *France*,
> The warres affordeth nought, home will I trug.
> Bawd will I turne, and use the slyte of hand:
> To England will I steale,
> And there Ile steale.[221]

Notably, in the Folio -- as in the Quarto -- Pistol wonders at the end of the war whether fortune plays "the hussy with me now?" (5.1.71). However, the point made in the Quarto is diluted in the Folio, as the talk of Fortune seems to apply less to the beating he has received than to the news of the sickness of Doll (5.1.71-3). The Quarto depicts the battle of Agincourt in much the same way as the Folio -- with the exchange between Pistol and the French nobleman. One notable difference however is that the Folio extends the scene to include another instance of Pistol being mistaken for one who is nobler than he really is; the Frenchman thinks him a great gentleman (4.4.43-45).

Success, degree, or greatness might, when we consider Pistol, be attributed as much to Fortune as to Virtue and thus might, like Fortune itself, be considered mutable or subject to change. The problem for Henry V in

[221] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 81.

Shakespeare's play is that "greatness" -- and in particular military greatness -- would seem to have been called into question by Pistol's interpolation into the equation. That is, if Pistol can briefly be considered "great" (and subsequently fall from grace) then is it possible that Henry's wartime "greatness" too is suspect?

This is a plausible alternative explanation for Henry's success. And it seems to me that Shakespeare happily suggests it, if Henry will not. Take for instance the final lines of the play, in which the Chorus first describes Henry as "This star of England" (5.3.6), but then immediately follows this with "...Fortune made his sword/ By which the world's best garden he achieved" (5.3.6-7). In light of what we have seen earlier, the latter part of the statement reads as a qualifier for Henry's success. He succeeded in achieving greatness and in gaining France, but it was "Fortune" which explains this success.

The introduction of Fortune is crucial, as Fortune equates with uncertainty and mutability, and provides explanations for abrupt rises and falls -- explanations which do not necessarily depend upon God or virtue. Thus it is important to set the record straight on the extent of Fortune's presence in Shakespeare's play.

In this spirit, it is notable that Andrew Gurr mistakenly finds error in Pistol's description of Fortune, stating that it was not Fortune, but her victims who stood on the stone.[222] However, this is not the case. Fortune, as both Pistol and Flewellyn rightly suggest -- Flewellyn merely expanding

[222] Andrew Gurr, *King Henry V*, p. 135n.

upon Pistol's description -- is often depicted standing on a round stone, or ball, in order to signify her inconstancy or mutability.

Randle Holme describes the goddess as follows: "Fortuna the goddess of Fortune and Chance, Depicted with two Faces, one Fair the other Black and Ugly, holding treasures, Jewels and Riches in one hand and a Staff or Wand in the other: But she is generally Drawn standing on a round Ball or Bubble in a large Sea-shell floting in the sea, holding a sail by the yard with one hand above her head...".[223] And, indeed, the tradition showing Fortune standing on a sphere is a large one; for instance, a sixteenth century emblem entitled "The instability of Fortune" shows just such a scene, with the verse "Slippery Fortune knows not how to remain in a fixed spot...".[224] George Wither evidently also appreciated this imagery: his Emblem VII of book 1 (A fickle Woman wanton growne, Preferres a Crowde, before a crowne) shows the "fickle" woman balanced upon a ball: "Her footing, on a Ball, his mistress sets,/ Which in a moment slips, and she is gone".[225] The same idea can be found in the work of Achille Bocchi in which Fortuna appears, blindfolded, seated on a ball.[226] Finally, the emblems of Andreas Alciatus, dating from the mid-sixteenth century, also contain this imagery:

> As Fortune (Fortuna) has her foot on an unsteady ball (palla), so Mercury sits on a solid stone (pietra). He has the honour of the

[223] Randle Holme, *Academy of Armory*, unpaginated.

[224] Leslie Thompson (ed.), *Fortune: "All is but Fortune"*, (The Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C., 2000), p. 19, citing Hadrianus Junius [*Emblemata*] Antwerp, 1565 No. XXVI, "Fortunae instabilitas".

[225] George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635) (John Horden, selected and edited) *English Emblem Books*, no. 12, Scolar Press, 1973.

[226] "Fortuna and Sapienta", Bovelles, *Liber De Sapiente*, Paris, 1510, fol. 118v., cited in Elizabeth See Watson, *Achille Bocchi and the Emblem Book as Symbolic Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

> intellect (intellecto); Fortune plans unstable works and maintains little faith (fede); therefore, he who makes use of art (arte) is wise (saggio). Therefore everyone should learn good arts, which bring about that fortune in the end will be conquered.[227]

Returning to *Henry V*, it is important that the final Chorus of Shakespeare's play, having described the heights achieved by one king and one nation, then proceeds to describe the depths attending the next king, his son:

> Henry the Sixth, in infant bands crowned king
> Of France and England, did this king succeed,
> Whose state so many had the managing
> That they lost France and made his England bleed (5.3.9-12).

It is appropriate that the Chorus, having shown how a king might reach the top of Fortune's wheel, then shows that a king might just as quickly find himself at the bottom.

Fortune might be seen as the guiding hand behind war for the French also. Firstly, games of chance figure in their warmaking; the French dice for English prisoners in *The Famous Victories*, and the Chorus of the Folio alludes to this: "The confident and over-lusty French/ Do the low-rated English play at dice" (4.0.18-19). However, more significant than this are the words of Bourbon upon realizing that the battle is lost:

> *Mort de ma vie*, all is confounded, all!
> Reproach and everlasting shame
> Sits mocking in our plumes.
> O *méchante fortune*!... [O evil fortune]...
> O perdurable shame, let's stab ourselves.
> Be these the wretches that we played at dice for? (4.5.3-9).

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[227] Alciato, emblem 99 (Lyon, 1551), cited in Peter M. Daly, *Andreas Alciatus: Emblems in Translation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

Pride, and Fortune are the themes of this outburst. For Bourbon, the shame of loss has come about because Fortune has abandoned the French at Agincourt.

Finally, it might be noted that the figure of Henry -- and not just Shakespeare's Henry -- was by no means totally free from associations with Fortune; Samuel Daniel in his *Civil Wars* states: "When Henry V died, Fortune abandoned England".[228] Furthermore, Daniel, as he discusses the young Henry VI, goes so far as to label the preceeding Henry "Fortune's minion":

> An infant king doth in the state succeed
> Skarse one yeare old, left unto others guide,
> Whose carefull trust, though such as shew'd indeed
> They waigh'd their charge more than the world beside;
> And did with dutie, zeale and love proceed:
> Yet for all what their travaile could provide
> Could not woo fortune to remaine with us
> When this her Minion was departed thus....[229]

This verse compares, in its identification of Fortune and king, with the final lines of the Chorus in Shakespeare's play. In the first part of this chapter, I attempted to highlight the importance of Fortune in Shakespeare's *Henry V*. In the second part, I shall argue that Fortune and "risk" attain a heightened prominence in the play through use of imagery from the sport of tennis.

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[228] Quoted in Geoffrey Bullough (ed.), *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), vol.4, p. 430.

[229] Stanza 45, quoted in Bullough, vol.4, p. 430.

Henry V, Risk and Chance

We find that risk and chance are very much discussed in the Quarto *Henry V*, as indeed they are in the Folio version. In both texts the concept of risk surfaces first in the consideration of the threat posed to England by the Scots in the King's absence in France. If Henry takes his army to France, he weakens his defences at home and leaves England vulnerable:

> For once the Eagle, England being in pray,
> To his unfurnish nest the weazel Scot
> Would suck her egs (sic), playing the mouse in absence of the cat.[230]

Nor is such a threat an idle one, for Henry himself recognizes there is historical precedent for such attack, saying:

> For you shall read, never my great grandfather
> Unmaskt his power for *France*,
> But that the Scot on his unfurnisht Kingdome,
> Came pouring like the Tide into a breach,
> That *England* being empty of defences,
> Hath shooke and trembled at the brute hereof. [231]

The prudent course of action then is proposed in the Quarto by an anonymous Lord, advice which he says comes from "a saying very old and true":

> If you will *France* win,
> Then with *Scotland* first begin.[232]

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[230] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 40.

[231] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 39.

[232] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 40; p. 40.

And, indeed, Exeter seemingly agrees: "It followes then, the cat must stay at home".[233]

Henry, having considered the arguments for and against undertaking a war with France, should his demands be denied, admits the French ambassadors, who bring with them the equally famous and crucial gift of tennis balls. At this point the concept of risk would seem to disappear. The king's response to the insult is remembered for its bravado:

> Your message and his present we accept:
> When we have matched our rackets to these balles,
> We will by Gods grace play such a set,
> Shall strike his fathers crowne into the hazard.
> ...
> ...all the Courts of *France* shall be disturbd with chases.
> ...
> And tell him this, his mock hath turnd his balles to gunstones.[234]

The transformation of the insult into a threat of vengeance relies heavily on the conflation of the images and terminology of tennis and warfare. Rackets and balls, playing a set, courts and chases, balls and gunstones, striking the crown into the hazard -- these are images which through their stridency lie unforgettably at the centre of Henry's subsequent actions.

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[233] Although, it is true that he immediately argues against such a "curst necessity", instead making use of the analogy of society as a bee-hive to suggest that English society can function without its soldier king:

> Whilste that the armed hand doth fight abroad
> The advised head controlles at home. (Holderness and Loughrey, p. 40)

[234] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 42-43.

And this is precisely the point. We remember the bravado of the "tennis" related claims which emphatically suggest the success of England and of its king, and, unsurprisingly, since we know the story of Henry V and his great victory, we are happy to accept the king's assured reply to the ambassadors; we too are confident of victory. Certainly, performances of the scene reinforce this interpretation. One need only think of the menace of Branagh's film version. However, what we tend to overlook in accounts such as Branagh's, as well as in the text at this point of the play, is the uncertainty of Henry's endeavour.

It can be argued that uncertainty is present, however, and is in fact emphasized in the play's references to sport. We know that the idea of "sport", "play", or "game" is an important one in *Henry V*. At its most elemental level, Henry's war is itself equated with a "game" - tennis - through his response to the French ambassadors. And indeed the king elsewhere recognizes warfare as a game, stating at one point:

> For when cruelty and lenitie play for a Kingdome
> The gentlest gamester is the sooner winner.[235]

What needs to be realized, however, is that games necessarily involve, and invoke thoughts of, chance. The French, like Henry, speak of war and games in the same breath; but unlike Henry, who always seems to emphasize winning, they manage to emphasize the attendant risk that one might lose: take for instance the exchange between Constable and Orleance before the battle of Agincourt. Orleance asks:

> Well who will go with me to hazard,
> For a hundred English prisoners?[236]

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[235] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 60.

Orleance is speaking here of the dice game hazard, his utterance a proud prediction of a great impending victory. However, such bravado is deflated by Constable, whose response highlights precisely what Henry's use of "hazard" in the tennis ball theme has pointedly missed: "You must go to hazard your selfe,/ Before you have them".[237]

There is the prospect of losing. In the Folio version the message is much the same, but this time the exchange occurs between Rambures and Constable:

Rambures	Who will go to hazard with me for twenty prisoners?
Constable	You must first go yourself to hazard, ere you have them (3.8.78-79)

The question for *Henry V*, in the light of such risk as those exposed above, is whether the "risks" of war are ever acknowledged by Shakespeare's Henry.

I have suggested that Henry's reply to the ambassadors appears a confident one, and that the audience views it as such, but "risk" and uncertainty are there to be found -- undeniably subsumed by the sporting metaphor but paradoxically enabled by it also. Within his reply, Henry almost hides the qualifying statements which tell of possible failure. This is particularly the case when it comes to his appeals for, or his reliance on, divine support. Henry's success, he tells us, will come about through God's support:

> We will by Gods grace play such a set,
> Shall strike his fathers crowne into the hazard.
> Tell him he hath made a match with such a wrangler,

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[236] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 63.

[237] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 63.

That all the Courts of *France* shall be disturbed with chases.[238]

Such a speech seems to accord with Henry's appeals to God throughout Shakespeare's play also. Even the Chorus reports that Henry ascribes his triumphs to God:

> Where that his lords desire him to have borne
> His bruised helmet and his bended sword
> Before him through the city. He forbids it,
> Being free from vainness and self-glorious pride,
> Giving full trophy, signal and ostent
> Quite from himself to God....(5.0.17-22)[239]

Such appeals, by ascribing success to God, have the effect of switching the agency from king -- his bruised helmet and bended sword indicating the personal efforts he has made -- unto God, thus strengthening the impression of divine approval for the war and the king. Such rhetoric also banishes thoughts of Fortune from accounts of the victory.

However, we must not forget that there is in war the implicit possibility of failure, in this case the possibility that God's grace is not with Henry in these actions. And, despite the fact that such potential insecurities seem initially to be overridden by the sporting metaphors which roll from the king's tongue, we find that insecurities remain to be found.

Firstly, we might consider the fact that Henry's "confident" sporting metaphors from tennis are framed by pleas or appeals to God's assistance; the first appeal we have seen above, and another comes after the affecting

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[238] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 42.

[239] Henry's appeals to God occur, for instance at 1.2.303, 1.2.307; Henry's thanks to God for the victory at Agincourt can be found at 4.8.98-99, 4.8.103-04, 4.8.107-08, 4.8.112, 4.8.115

passages which recast the tennis balls as gunstones and return the "mock" to France, concluding:

> ...For this his mocke
> Shall mocke many a wife out of their deare husbands.
> Mocke mothers from their sonnes, mocke Castles downe,
> I some are yet ungotten and unborne,
> That shall have cause to curse the Dolphins scorne.
> But this lyes all within the will of God, to whom we doo appeale.[240]

The power of the king's rhetoric and imagery leads us to almost miss the qualifier in the final line -- victory is uncertain and "lyes...within the will of God". We have risen so high with the descriptions of what will happen to France when the mock is returned that we neglect the possibility of failure. However, Henry brings up just such a possibility here, and again in a later question to his Lords:

> Do you not thinke the power we beare with us,
> Will make us conquerors in the field of France?

Insecurity is evident in the reply also, the first part of which is "No doubt my Liege", but the second part of which is "if each man do his best". Again uncertainty or "doubt" is initially stripped from the enterprise of war, but, again, it surfaces with the qualifier "if each man do his best".

There is, of course, a complication with this exchange, in that it involves the King and the three traitors he has discovered and is about to expose. One might argue for the king's supreme power -- perhaps aided by divine support -- in the fact that he has been able to prevent the conspiracy against him. However, one might better argue that the mere existence of such a conspiracy is proof that "each man" is unlikely to do his best. And, in fact,

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[240] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 43.

the prominently reported actions of Pistol, Bardolph, and Nym demonstrate that some men do not even seek to do their best. This being recognized, the doubt highlighted by Masham remains: war remains a risky business.

In the Quarto, at the end of the scene involving the traitors, Henry concludes that success is assured: "Since God cut off this dangerous treason".[241] In the Folio, the lines run as follows:

> We doubt not a fair and lucky war,
> Since God so graciously hath brought to light
> This dangerous treason lurking in our way
> ...We doubt not now
> But every rub is smoothed on our way (2.3.179-83)

The Folio introduces "luck", "doubt", and the "rub" from the game of bowls. Thus, despite Henry's claim "we doubt not..." perhaps he achieves the opposite and paradoxically implies doubt.

It is evident from the above that the concept of risk, or chance, is present in the text of *Henry V*, especially in Henry's reply to the Dauphin's gift; what also needs to be appreciated, however, is that the element of risk, or chance, is present too in the very imagery of this scene. That is to say, that the conflation of tennis and warfare in Henry's reply to the ambassadors itself serves to emphasize the riskiness of Henry's proposed action.

To understand this we need to again consider Henry's reply to the Dauphin's gift:

> Your message and his present we accept:
> When we have matched our rackets to these balles,
> We will by Gods grace play such a set,

[241] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 49.

Shall strike his fathers crowne into the hazard.
...
all the courts of *France* shall be disturbed with chases.
...
And tell him this, his mock hath turnd his balles to gunstones.[242]

In accepting the tennis balls, Henry undertakes to play a figurative game of tennis in France. What we need to appreciate, however, is that "risk" is inherent in this game -- especially as Henry describes it. Looking first to the terminology Henry utilizes we find that even his assertion that he will play a "set" at tennis implies risk; consider the following description of a tennis match in *Florio's second Frutes* 1591:

P. Will you plaie in set?
T. Yea marie, therefore give us good balles.
P. Here are two dozen of faire and white balles.
...
T. Let us keepe the lawes of the court.
G. That is, stake the money uner the line, is it not so?[243]

The question which begins the exchange highlights that a "set" at tennis is competitive -- as opposed to mere practice or entertainment -- thus the need for good balls. The passage highlights that a serious "set" at tennis involves the hazarding of -- with the potential to lose -- one's money. Thus, even the simple term "set" contains within it the implication of risk and loss. Moreover, it is telling that risk and uncertainty could themselves be represented as a game of tennis, as evidenced in the work of Thomas

[242] Holderness and Loughrey, pp. 42-43.

[243] Giovanni Florio. *Florios Second Frutes* (London, 1591) reprinted as a facsimile by De Capo Press, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Amsterdam, 1969 New York (Number 157 of the English Experience series), p. 25.

Combe (1593); in Combe's *The Theatre of Fine Devices* [Moral Emblems] *emblem IV*, we are told:

> One bird in hand is better farre Then three which in the hedge are. who doth expect the bals uncertaine bound, And quite permit the certaine flight go by, A player bad at tennis he is found, And gets but seldome any good therby. So some neglect the true and perfect ground, And for vaine hope do wander quite awry: that with fond enterprises and vaine glory, with diverse troubles have themselves made sorry.[244]

If the term "set" implies risk, so too, more obviously, does the term hazard. Henry claims that he will strike the French king's crown into the hazard, but in doing so, he emphasizes the riskiness of his own attempts. The *Oxford English Dictionary* lists a number of definitions for the term hazard, and we see that each of the common definitions is appropriate to Henry's reply; hazard may be defined variously as: "Each of the winning openings in a tennis court" (citing Shakespeare's *Henry V* 1599), "To endanger (any person or thing)" (citing Spenser 1596), "to get by chance or luck" (1575), "To take the chance or risk of; to venture upon; to adventure, venture (to do something) (1581) and "a game at dice" (c1300).

In suggesting that he will strike the French king's "crowne into the hazard", Henry potentially introduces a number of puns on the term hazard.[245]

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[244] Bath, p. 48. Bath also writes of Guillaume de la Perrière's *Theatre des bon engins* (1540). This work, the second emblem book ever published, contains a number of emblems concerned with the game of tennis. Firstly, there is one counselling us "not to neglect a present certainty in vain hope of future good fortune" (Bath, p. 48). Secondly, another emblem, which is intriguingly appropriate to the Henry V story, showing two tennis players, has the motto "Insult will provoke the return of Insult" (Bath,. 49). La Perrière's emblem book was translated into English by Thomas Coombe in 1593 and was renamed *The Theatre of Fine Devices*. It was published by Shakespeare's publisher, Richard Field.

[245] Holderness and Loughrey, p. 42.

Firstly, we appreciate that the term literally applies to an opening in the wall of a Royal tennis court, an opening into which one may strike a ball in order to win a point. However, the term may also be defined in a number of ways which suggest risk. For instance, the term "hazard", as we saw above, could also refer to game at dice. This game of Hazard is described in one seventeenth century work as popular, but also as "...a Game that maketh a quick riddance on one side or other, and therefore it hath not its name given improperly; for it ruinateth speedily".[246]

Shakespeare evidently appreciated the niceties of the dice game "Hazard" and also appreciated the puns on risk which could be made on the term. In *1 Henry IV*, Hotspur asks:

> ...were it good
> To set the exact wealth of all our states
> All at one cast? To set so rich a main
> On the nice hazard of one doubtful hour?
> It were not good; for therein should we read
> The very bottom and the soul of hope,
> The very list, the very utmost bound
> Of all our fortunes. (4.1.44-52)

Thus, returning to *Henry V*, striking a crown into the hazard, through its puns, implies a level of risk which Henry elsewhere refuses to acknowledge.

In fact, the idea of bandying (hitting the ball at tennis) -- as mentioned by Henry in his reply to the dauphin's ambassadors -- had not only the above positive implication of vigour, but could be somewhat pejorative; take, for instance the phrase *À bander & à racler* which Cotgrave defines as "By hooke or crooke; in all extremitie", or more expressive still *coucher tout à bander & à*

[246] Richard Head and Francis Kirkman, *The English Rogue*, Chap. XVI, part 4, unpaginated.

racler, "To set all on sixes and sevens; to set his whole rest upon a deperat [*sic*] game". The idea of inherent danger or risk is borne out in these phrases. Thus Henry, by appealing to this sport and using its terminology, potentially highlights his own recklessness in pursuing war. Furthermore, such a reading -- which emphasizes the risks of military action -- is reinforced through other tennis-related description and terminology in this scene. Arguably, where Henry claims to be about to strike the Dauphin's crown into the hazard, he emphasizes the risk involved through the use of the term hazard -- at once an opening in the tennis court wall and a term for risk, gambling, or danger.

Odds

Attendant with "risk" and "gambling" is the concept of "odds". This concept too appears in Shakespeare's play, as we shall see in the following argument.

Act I scene ii of *Henry V* contains numerous references to the term "bar" in the course of the legal argument over the justness of Henry's proposed war. Firstly, the king asks Canterbury to "justly and religiously unfold/ Why the law Salic that they have in France/ Or should or should not bar us in our claim" (I.2.10-12). Canterbury replies:

> ...There is no bar
> To make against your highness' claim to France

But this which they produce from Pharamond:
In terram Salicam mulieres ne succedant,
– No woman shall succeed in Salic land –
Which Salic land the French unjustly glose
To be the realm of France, and Pharamond
The founder of this law and female bar. (I.2.35-42)

However, Canterbury unfolds a catalogue of French kings who have previously rested their claims on the female line:

...all appear
To hold in right and title of the female.
So do the kings of France unto this day.
Howbeit, they would hold up this Salic law
To bar your highness claiming from the female,
And rather choose to hide them in a net
Than amply to embar their crooked titles
Usurped from you and your progenitors. (I.2.88-95)

The essence of the above passage becomes one of unfair odds. According to Canterbury, the French hold up the Salic law -- no succession through the female line -- as a "bar to", or in order to "bar", Henry's claim to the French throne, whilst they themselves flout this same law to justify their own claims. As Gurr points out in the Cambridge edition: "A heraldic 'bar' was a pair of broad horizontal bands across a shield". Thus a pun on "bar" is evident. However, I would argue that a further pun also exists.

As I have stated above, the essence of the passage would seem to be an unfairness of odds. I would suggest that we might find in the rules of tennis

a means to better understand these lines. It was common practice in the game of tennis for players to give each other "odds", or in other words for better or worse players to allow their opponents more or less freedoms respectively. One very common means of handicap, or laying odds, was to "bar" certain parts of the court to the opposition -- typically the player would "bar the openings" or "bar the winning openings".[247] Under these restrictions, it was stipulated that the shots of one of the players, which entered the various openings of the court, and which would normally be regarded as winning shots ("good"), would now instead be classed as losing shots ("bad"). These odds would of course be implemented if the players recognized a difference in their capabilities - the worse player would want to make the game more difficult for his opponent (especially if high stakes were involved) by "barring" normally winning shots, which he would know that he would find difficult to repel or defend. Thus, the French, who appear to be in an inferior legal position in this case, are changing the odds by barring Henry from a legal course which should normally ensure his victory.

Later in the play, Henry's Ambassadors are received at the French court, where talk of tennis resurfaces; Exeter again conflates war and tennis by punning on the Paris-Louvre as both tennis court and Royal court: "He'll make your Paris Louvre shake for it,/ Were it the mistress-court of mighty Europe" (2.4.133-34). Here also, the Dauphin professes that the gift of the

[247] E. B. Noel & J. O. M. Clark, *A History of Tennis*: "A very great variety of handicaps can be given by the method of alloting some disadvantage to one of the players by arranging that some part or parts of the court shall be barred to him, so that any stroke he makes which falls or drops in such parts of the court shall count to his opponent. The main types of handicaps are: Barring walls, Barring openings, and Barring parts of the floor" (vol. 2, p. 449).

tennis-balls was presented due to a desire for "odds" -- conflict -- with England:

> Say, if my father render fair return
> It is against my will, for I desire
> Nothing but odds with England. To that end,
> As matching to his youth and vanity,
> I did present him with the Paris balls (2.4.128-32).

The message of Exeter's embassage has been that Henry considers himself the rightful king of France, due to his descent from Edward III, and Exeter counsels that the French should not attempt to hide the crown, even in their hearts, or war will follow. The "return" -- also a tennis term -- which the Dauphin refers to above is, therefore, the reply to Henry's claim for the throne; this is the matter of which the French king says: "For us, we will consider of this further./ Tomorrow shall you bear our full intent/ Back to our brother of England" (2.4.114-16). It should be remembered that the success of the claim rests entirely on the willingness of the French to accept Henry's lineage from the female side. Thus the Dauphin's "odds" perhaps refer to the imminent "quarrel", perhaps to the "bet at tennis" (as glossed by Gurr), but also, in all probablity, the reference reiterates the idea that the forthcoming rejection of Henry's claim, does set up "odds" in the game for the kingdom - for the French bar Henry from claiming from the female line, despite the fact that their own monarchy is justified only through the female line. Thus the Dauphin wants to maintain the "odds" expressed earlier.

Hazardous Play

In claiming that he intends to strike the Dauphin's crown into the hazard, Henry is also signifying a particularly aggressive (but risky) form of play: an especially lucky, or skilful player might win the game in one stroke by putting the ball into the hazard, but if the attempt was unsuccessful the receiver was left with a distinct advantage. In Court Tennis it is the server who has the advantage: "...in court tennis the configuration of the court confers a very real tactical advantage on the server. In most matches, the server has a sixty-forty chance of winning any given point".[248] The receiving side is called the hazard side. However, the server must still refrain from taking uneccesary risks: "The divine chase imposes its moral restraint upon fiery hitting and makes what would otherwise be a stupid display of hard hitting a game of skill and fine judgment, and this with plenty of hard hitting no ways debarred".[249]

That is, leaving aside the question of puns and tennis terminology and moving on to the nature of the tennis game itself, we find also that the very nature of the game Henry decribes in his reply -- the very action of winning a point at tennis by striking the ball into the hazard -- is recognized as risky in itself. Of all the ways one might win a point in the game of Royal tennis, attempting to strike the ball into the hazard is one of the most difficult, and also, if one is unsuccessful, leaves one the most vulnerable to defeat. One present-day sports historian makes the point that in tennis "power", or the

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[248] Stephen S. Smith. "The Sporting Scene: The Game of Kings", in *The New Yorker*, Sept. 16, 1991, p. 68.

[249] Robin Magowin. "This Ancient Sport of Kings", in Racquet Quarterly, vol.11, 1983, p. 42, quoting from the "Saturday Review" of 1891.

forceful shot, is risky: "Except in those situations where you are deliberately trying to hit the ball into one of the openings, it profits you little in court tennis to swing for the fences. To do so would be to produce a shot that would probably bound off the wall far enough into the court on the second bounce to create an easy chase to beat. Thus the good player, the prudent player, of the game does better to rely on 'control, accuracy and judgment' than on pure power."[250] The use of force involves much greater risk.

We now see that Henry's response to the ambassadors emphasizes "risk". This fits with the earlier discussion in the scene which centred on whether the King should take the prudent approach and stay at home to defend England -- pressing his claims against France by the safer route of first subduing Scots -- or should instead go to war. Henry chooses the risk of war. Henry, then, shows himself an imprudent king. Arguably, in promising to undertake a risky war, when a safer alternative exists, and then by figuring that war as a risky passage of play from the game of tennis, Henry's character is revealed.

[250] Barry Tarshis, "The Noble Sire of all Racket Sports: Court Tennis", in *Town and Country Magazine*, Nov. 1978, p. 225.

Chapter 4: *Henry V*: Choosing Sport - Sport and War

In this chapter I argue, with reference to the *Gesta Grayorum* of 1594, that war and sport could be regarded by Renaissance audiences as two opposing ends of the same spectrum, or two poles of the same debate. Armed with this sporting context I then return to *Henry V*.

The *Gesta Grayorum*

In 1594, the Gentlemen of Gray's Inn initiated some sport - a masque and associated entertainments - as part of their Revels "betwixt All-Hollantide and Christmas". This entertainment was entitled the *Gesta Grayorum; or, The History of the High and Mighty Prince Henry, Prince of Purpoole...* (1594).[251] What is notable about the *Gesta Grayorum* is, first, that the gentlemen of Gray's Inn through their dramatic sport illustrate just how such "sport" might be used to provide counsel for a prince; secondly, that "sport" itself could be counselled as a way of life; and thirdly, that the entertainment suggests that Elizabethan authors and audiences (including courtiers)

[251] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 262.

recognized that much counsel and counter-counsel might be advanced in any one dramatic work.

Central to the revelry at Gray's Inn on this occasion in 1594 was the creation of a ficticious Prince: "...at length...it was determined, that there should be elected a Prince of Purpoole, to govern our state for the time". The "Prince" decided upon by the members of the Inn, was "one Mr. Henry Helmes, a Norfolk gentleman, who was thought to be accomplished with all good parts, fit for so great a dignity; and was also a very proper man of personage, and very active in dancing and revelling". In the explanation for the choice of their fictitious, theatrical, Prince, we see a catalogue of the qualities that might be beneficial for a real Prince; the Prince of Purpoole was chosen because he was thought "accomplished with all good parts, fit for so great a dignity", and because he was "active in dancing and revelling";[252] the dramatic Prince needed to look the part, and be capable of performing his public role. In a sense then, it can be seen that the role of the Monarch was indeed seen to be literally that - a role. The theatricality of kingship, in an age of increasing mimetic representations of rulers on the stage, was something which was receiving closer attention especially in plays such as Shakespeare's *Henry V*.

The fiction invented by the members of the Inn was undertaken, primarily, to entertain the Queen and her court, and, in the process, "increase the credit of Gray's Inn". However, as we shall see, the creation of a theatrical ruler and state also provided for some investigation of the nature of Elizabethan kingship and State.

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[252] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 262; pp. 262-63; p. 263; p. 263.

The audience for the revels at Gray's Inn, on the 3rd January 1595, was an influential one: "There were present many great and noble personages, as the Lord Keeper, the Earls of Shrewsbury, Cumberland, Northumberland, Southampton and Essex, the Lords Buckhorst, Windsor, Mountjoy, Burleigh, Mounteagle, Thomas Howard; Sir Thomas Heneage, Sir Robert Cecil and a great number of Knights, Ladies and very worshipful persons."[253] Essex and Cecil are particularly notable names on the list. Indeed, Grays' Inn had strong connections to the Court. Prominent figures including Walsingham, Burghley, Bacon amongst others were members.[254]

The "winter revels at Gray's Inn 1594-5 were especially elaborate, lasting from 20 December to Shrovetide." One of the notable attributes of these festivities was the creation of the fictional 'Prince of Purpoole', who not only figured centrally in the performance of the *Gesta Grayorum*, but also ventured out of the drama and into the city itself, undertaking a royal progress through London, which was apparently, "so convincingly magnificent that Londoners thought that he was 'some great Prince, in very good deed, passing through the City'".[255]

If one wishes to further contextualize the *Gesta Grayorum*, one might chose to consider that one of its principle authors is thought to be Francis Bacon; this becomes interesting when one considers that Bacon was one of the Earl of Essex's circle and that Bacon also authored Essex's Entertainment later in

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[253] Harrison, p. 1.

[254] Richard C. McCoy, 'Lord of Liberty: Francis Davison and the cult of Elizabeth', pp. 212-228 in Guy, p. 216.

[255] McCoy, p. 216; p. 216.

1595.[256] In the *Gesta Grayorum*, Bacon is thought to be the author of the six speeches advising the Prince of Purpoole on an appropriate course of action, and war, philosophy, building, wealth, virtue are each considered only to be rejected in favour of play. The resemblance between this structure and that in the Earl's entertainment written later in the same year is self-evident. The latter work has been seen by critics as an attempt by Bacon to "reconcile the conflicting interests of his Patron [Essex] and his sovereign by urging ... a 'chivalric compromise' satisfying to both". This was a compromise apparently rejected by the Queen, who "abruptly walked out" of the performance. Martial figures, like Essex, seem to employ such entertainment to glorify marital honour whilst also showing respect to the monarch.[257]

The *Gesta Grayorum* and the Earl's Entertainment -- both performed before audiences which included many prominent courtiers -- contain debate-like elements intended, it would seem, to put various cases and arguments before a Court audience. It may be worth considering this in the fuller context of court politics: "Throughout the final decade of Elizabeth's rule, the earl of Essex was increasingly determined to gain ascendancy at Court by placing his own candidates in office. The earl had also been pushing hard to appoint Francis Bacon Attorney-General and then Solicitor-General, but both posts were denied him in 1594, the latter only a month before the *Gesta Grayorum*."[258]

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[256] Mc Coy, p. 217.

[257] McCoy, p. 217; p. 218; p. 218.

[258] McCoy, p. 220.

Returning to the performance of the *Gesta Grayorum*, it might be argued that this entertainment at Gray's Inn presents to its audience a "mock" king in order to investigate issues of power and kingship. The critic Sandra Billington discusses the *Gesta Grayorum* briefly in her wider discussion of mock and festive kingship in the Renaissance. Billington's focus on "mock" kings seeks to develop the arguments of critics and theorists including Mikhail Bahktin, C. L. Barber, Michael Bristol, and others who have undertaken - to quote Billington - "a fruitful investigation into the symbiotic relationships between seasonal festivity and peasant rebels who adopted mock king titles". Billington notes "the rise and fall of kings...played out in king games", and considers whether the creation of the mock king is part of a process of "ritualized disorder which led to social regeneration". That is, a king's position on earth was evidently one which needed some delimitation if festive activity is to be taken into account: "The seasonal dethronement of kings at Christmas was a reminder to those in power of their relation to Christ and of the limitations of their human authority".[259]

Indeed, a comparison between fictional and real courts was established in the structure of the entertainment itself; the Masque, we are told, was: "...presented (by his Highness's command) for the Entertainment of Q. ELIZABETH, who, with the Nobles of both Courts, was present thereat".[260] This structure, where the fictional Prince presents a masque to a "visiting" Ruler, echoes the standard practice of the Elizabethan court when

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[259] Sandra Billington, *Mock Kings in Medieval Society and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 50-51; p. 1; p. 1, p. 1; p. 93. Billington develops her ideas with reference to influential texts including: M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his world*, trans. C. Emerson (Manchester, 1984), M. Bristol, *Carnival and Theater* (London, 1985), and C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy* (Princeton, 1959).

[260] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 262.

entertaining visiting Princes. Thus the Prince of Purpoole's court behaves, in this instance, exactly as an Elizabethan court would have behaved.

As important as the creation of the Prince was the creation of his state and court. His court was labelled "our court at Graya",[261] and the limits of his realm, both spatial and temporal can be deduced from his full official title:

> THE HIGH AND MIGHTY PRINCE HENRY, Prince of PURPOOLE, Arch Duke of STAPULIA and BERNADIA, Duke of HIGH and NETHER HOLBORN, Marquis of ST. GILES and TOTTENHAM, Count Palatine of BLOOMSBURY and CLERKENWELL, Great Lord of the Cantons of ISLINGTON, KENTISH TOWN, PADDINGTON, and KNIGHTS-BRIDGE, Knight of the Most Heroical Order of the HELMET, and Sovereign of the same: who reigned and died A.D. 1594.[262]

The Prince, like the real sovereign, has a realm and a court and even seeks funds for his treasury. Moreover, the fiction is further enhanced through the presentation of a coronation ceremony, an, "honourable Inthronization", and the installation of "Officers and Attendants".[263]

The Prince who entertained Elizabeth and her nobles was, then, created to be a mirror for Elizabeth, his court a mirror for hers, and the attitudes and behaviour of the fictional court a mirror for those of the real. These conclusions are supported and emphasized when we consider the following representative passage:

> Upon the 20th day of December, being St. Thomas's Eve, the Prince with all his train in order, as above set down, [approximately 70

[261] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 263.

[262] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 262.

[263] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 263; p. 265; pp. 265-67.

> office bearers and followers are listed on pp. 265-67] marched from his lodging to the Great Hall: and there took his place in his throne, under a rich cloth of state: his counsellors and Great Lords were placed about him, and before him; below the halfe pace, at a table, sate his learned Council and Lawyers; the rest of the officers and attendants took their proper places, as belonged to their condition.

The description of the fictional court could equally be a description of the actual court in similar circumstances. [264]

This presentation of a literary or dramatic Prince, as a model for a current Prince to follow or to learn from, was not of course a new idea in Elizabethan times. In fact, there is a notable precedent in an earlier Tudor work about Henry V, this being the "life" of Henry V (*Gesta Henrici*) which was translated into English in the early sixteenth century by an anonymous author who is commonly referred to as the translator of Livius. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford writes that the translator's "purpose was didactic, to give 'our Sovereign Lord' [Henry VIII] an example of honour, fame, and victory 'of that most puissant prince King Henry V, your ancestor'".[265] Present in the translation is the "deliberate design to apply the political lesson of the life of Henry V to the times of Henry VIII".[266] Just as Henry VIII was expected to learn his lesson from the life of Henry V, so too, it becomes evident as the *Gesta Grayorum* progresses, the Elizabethan court is expected to take its own didactic medicine from this performance. Elizabeth and her courtiers are presented with a performance which invites comparison between the behaviour and morés of the Prince of Purpoole's court and their own. Queen and court are presented with a debate on how a

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[264] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 267.

[265] Kingsford, p. ix.

[266] Kingsford, p. xiii.

Prince should behave and rule, with the newly installed Prince of Purpoole asking the opinion of six of his lords as to how he should govern:

> My Lords,
> We have made choice of you, as our most faithful and favoured Counsellors, to advise with you, not any particular action of our State, but in general, of the scope and end whereunto you think it most for our honour, and the happiness of our State, that our government be rightly bent and directed: for we mean not to do as many Princes use; which conclude of their ends out of their own honours, and take counsel only of the means (abusing, for the most part, the wisdom of their Counsellors) set them the right way to the wrong place. But we desirous to leave as little to chance or humour as may be, do now give you liberty and warrant to set before us, to what port, as it were, the ship of our government should be bounden. And this we require you to do, without either respect to our affections, or your own; neither guessing what is most agreeable with our disposition, wherein we may easily deceive you; for Princes' hearts are inscrutable: nor on the other side, putting the case by yourselves, as if you would present us with a robe, whereof measure were taken by yourselves. Thus you perceive our mind and we expect your answer.[267]

Bearing in mind that this address, spoken before the Queen and a court audience in 1594, predates the similar call for counsel by Shakespeare's King, it seems appropriate to compare the sentiments of the above passage in the *Gesta Grayorum* with Henry's address to Canterbury (1.2.8-32) in Shakespeare's play.

Henry V: The Case, and Counsel, for War

In Shakespeare's play Henry is assiduously careful to ensure his legal claim to the throne of France:

My learned lord, we pray you to proceed,
And justly and religiously unfold
Why the law Salic that they have in France
Or should or should not bar us in our claim.
And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord,
That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading,
Or nicely charge your understanding soul
With opening titles miscreate, whose right
Suits not in native colours with the truth.
For God doth know how many now in health
Shall drop their blood in approbation
Of what your reverence shall incite us to.
Therefore take heed how you impawn our person,
How you awake our sleeping sword of war.
We charge you in the name of God take heed. (1.2.9-23)

However, it has often been argued that the play's opening scene potentially casts some doubt over Henry's words above. The opening scene shows Canterbury and Ely keen to avert the parliament's proposed taxation law, and, furthermore, shows them intent on gaining the king's support for their position. The suggestion that Henry appeals to the Archbishops for justification of his campaign, in the full knowledge that the Church needs to cultivate his favour, is by no means a new one, and leads to the argument that Canterbury's legal interpretation is possibly influenced by thought of what the king desires to hear.

The fictional Prince clearly calls for unbiased advice, as too does Henry in the later work; furthermore, in both speeches there is the acknowledgment that counsellors may frame their advice according to what they think the Prince wishes to hear. The major difference between the passages, however,

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[267] Nichols, vol. 3, pp. 287-88.

is that the Prince of Purpoole's appeal highlights the complicity of Princes in this process:

> Princes use; which conclude of their ends out of their own honours, and take counsel only of the means (abusing, for the most part, the wisdom of their counsellors) set them the right way to the wrong place.[268]

Whereas, in contrast, Shakespeare's Henry places all responsibility with the counsellor, saying,

> ...we will hear, note, and believe in heart
> That what you speak is in your conscience washed
> As pure as sin with baptism. (1.2.30-32)

The possibility that Canterbury may feel obliged to bend his advice to suit what he perceives as Henry's wishes is ignored in Henry's speech, and yet the earlier exchanges between Ely and Canterbury (1.1) have demonstrated that serving their own cause through appeasing the king is at the forefront of the Bishops' thoughts (1.1.69-89). Is Henry, in asking the advice of Canterbury, aware that the Church's interests are so clearly at stake, seeking to be set on "the right way to the wrong place"?

Neither does the opening of the play inspire confidence in the moral character of Henry. In fact, the description of the king is rather ambiguous. On the one hand, we are told by Canterbury: "The king is full of grace, and fair regard" (I.i.22) and by Ely "And a true lover of the holy Church" (I.i.23), and yet, his unruly youth is remembered, some might say highlighted:

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[268] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 277.

> The courses of his youth promised it not.
> ..his addiction was to courses vain,
> His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports,
> And never noted in him any study,
> Any retirement, any sequestration
> From open haunts and popularity. (I.i.24,54-59)

This follows from "We are blessed in the change./...Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,/ You would say it hath been all in all his study" (I.i.37, 41-42). The transformation is perhaps too miraculous. I would argue that we might feel some uneasiness at this point, and should wonder whether the political imperatives of Church and King allow a truthful exegesis of the law in this case. Both Church and King are arguably, for their own reasons, desirous of war with France, and the question remains unanswered as to whether the law is being corrupted in order that political ends be achieved.

Whatever the case, Canterbury's exhortations have the effect (and perhaps the king was already so disposed) of convincing Henry that his fame lies in war:

> Now we are well resolved, and by God's help
> And yours, the noble sinews of our power,
> France being ours, we'll bend it to our awe,
> Or break it all to pieces . Or there we'll sit,
> Ruling in large and ample empery
> O'er France and all her almost kingly dukedoms,
> Or lay these bones in an unworthy urn
> Tombless, with no remembrance over them. (1.2.222-29)

The pursuit of Glory and Fame appear prominent in Henry's thinking and in that of those around him. Canterbury, whilst careful to reassure the king

that law, and thus God, is on his side, also motivates the king with reminders of his glorious martial ancestry:

> Look back into your mighty ancestors.
> Go, my dread lord, to your great-grandsire's tomb,
> From whom you claim. Invoke his warlike spirit,
> And your great-uncle's, Edward the Black Prince,
> Who on the French ground played a tragedy,
> Making defeat on the full power of France....(1.2.102-07)

and Exeter adds:

> Your brother kings and monarchs of the earth
> Do all expect that you should rouse yourself,
> As did the former lions of your blood. (1.2.122-24)

It should not be forgotten that this address occurs between the time that Henry calls for the French ambassadors and the time that they arrive before him. Henry is, then, resolved to pursue France regardless of the content of the message brought by the Ambassadors. The king sees that his future fame lies in a successful war in France whilst defeat will ensure that his bones will end up, unremembered, in "an unworthy urn".

In the past, war had led to fame for the victor, and for England; war has the power to leave a "chronicle as rich with praise,/ As is the ooze and bottom of the sea/ With sunken wreck and sumless treasuries" (1.2.163-65). As the king prepares to meet with the French ambassadors he clearly has fame in mind:

> ...There we'll sit, Ruling in large and ample empery
> O'er France and all her almost kingly dukedoms,
> Or lay these bones in an unworthy urn
> Tombless, with no remembrance over them.

> Either our history shall with full mouth
> Speak freely of our acts, or else our grave
> Like Turkish mute shall have a tongueless mouth,
> Not worshipped with a waxen epitaph. (1.2.225-33)[269]

Later in France, Fluellen also reminds the king of the chronicles: "Your grandfather of famous memory, an't please your majesty, and your great-uncle Edward the Plack Prince of Wales, as I have read in the chronicles, fought a most prave pattle here in France" (4.7.82-85).[270]

There is a greatness of purpose here, with the king, following the counsel of Canterbury and his nobles, and following in the footsteps of his martial ancestors, attempting to ensure his ongoing fame. However, I would argue that a textual and contextual analysis of the scene brings into question the nobility of the king's purposeful resolution to his martial course of action. The key to such a reading lies in the contrast between the sentiments expressed in the above quoted speech of Henry and those found in the ambassador's speech which immediately follows it. Where Henry's words imply a resolute purpose to emulate the fame and deeds of his ancestors by engaging in the weighty and serious pursuit of war with France, the ambassador, on the other hand, speaks of pleasure and sport, advising: "there's naught in France/ That can be with a nimble galliard won;/ You cannot revel into dukedoms there" (1.2.251-53). The ambassador implies that Henry is fitter for "sport" and pleasure than war making. His advice, or the advice of his master the Dauphin, is that Henry should leave war

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[269] In the Quarto the passage echoes the earlier reference to "chronicles": "Eyther our Chronicles shal with full mouth speak/ Freely of our acts,/ Or else like toonglesse mutes/ Not worshipt with a paper Epitaph" (Holderness and Loughrey, p. 41).

alone and return to those "sporting" pursuits with which he is most familiar. Thus we have two sets of conflicting counsel being urged upon the king: the first, from the English side urges war; the second, from the French, counsels for a sporting peace. Indeed, "sport", in opposition to war, might be seen to be the central point of the comparison, as the French appeal not only to dancing and revelry (such pastimes earning the appellation "sport" in the Renaissance), but also, subsequently, to the "sport" (both in the Elizabethan and our contemporary sense of the term) of tennis, with the ambassador delivering the Dauphin's gift of tennis balls to the English king. It is explicitly stated that the "tun" of sports "treasure", the tennis-balls, is intended to stand in lieu of the French dukedoms which Henry claims; that is, the Dauphin's counsel is that Henry's martial, imperial aspirations should be replaced instead by sporting ones; Henry should seek his pleasure in other ways.

The Case (and counsel) Against War (and for sport)

Returning again to the *Gesta Grayorum*, it is interesting to note that of the six counsellors who appear before the Prince of Purpoole, the first advises that the Prince undertake a war, and the last that he forgo all else but sport. The other counsellors advise the "Study of Philosophy", seeking fame through the construction of "Buildings and Foundations", pursuing "Absoluteness of State and Treasure", and giving absolute emphasis to encouraging "Vertue and a Gracious Government". Each pursuit, effectively each plan

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[270] For the sake of consistency, I shall use the spelling "Fluellen" whenever referring to this character. The name tends to appear in texts and editions as either Fluellen, Llewellyn, or Flewellen.

for government and/or means to "fame" for the Prince of Purpoole, is shown to have its merits, but also its failings.

The First Counsellor urges the Exercise of War, asking: "how can he think any exercise worthy of your means, but that of conquest? for in a few words, What is your strength, if you find it not? Your fortune, if you try it not? Your vertue, if you shew it not?".[271] Further, the counsellor suggests:

> ...if you embrace the wars, your trophies and triumphs will be as continual coronations, that will not suffer your glory and contentment to fade and wither. Then, when you have enlarged your territories, ennobled your country, distributed fortunes, good or bad, at your pleasure, not only to particulars, but to cities and nations; marked the computations of time with your expeditions and voyages, and the memory of places by your exploits and victories, in your later years you shall find a sweet respect into the adventures of your youth, you shall enjoy your reputation, you shall record your travels, and after your own time you shall eternize your name, and leave deep foot-steps of your power in the world....Therefore embrace the wars, for they disparage you not; and believe, that if any Prince do otherwise, it is either in the weakness of his mind or means.[272]

This exhortation to war, with its promises of great fame and power, is initially very convincing. However, the arguments put forward here are rebutted by subsequent counsellors; firstly, by the second counsellor, who urges the "Study of Philosophy":

> It may seem, Most Excellent Prince, that my Lord, which now hath spoken, did never read the just censures of the wisest men, who compared great conquerors to great rovers and witches, whose power is in destruction, and not in preservation; else would he never have advised your Excellency to become as some comet, or

[271] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 288.

[272] Nichols, vol. 3, pp. 288-89.

> blazing-star, which would threaten and portend nothing but death and dearth, combustions and troubles of the world.[273]

Instead, the second counsellor urges that the Prince set his mind to "the conquest of the works of nature"; that is, to "searching out, inventing, and discovering of all whatsoever is hid in secret in the world...". The third counsellor adds his objections to both counsels: "My Lords that have already spoken, most excellent Prince, have both used one fallacy, in taking that for certain and granted, which was most uncertain and doubtful: for the one hath neither drawn in question the success and fortune of the wars; nor the other, the difficulties and errors in the conclusions of nature". He does, however, consider that both advisors have agreed on at least one point: "...they both, according to their several intentions, counselled your Excellency to win fame, and to eternize your name; though the one adviseth it in a course of great peril, and the other, of little dignity and magnificence".[274] The third counsellor proceeds with his own suggestion, being that the monarch's fame is best served through the creation of:

> ...goodly and Royal buildings and foundations, and the new institutions of orders, ordinances, and societies: that is, that your coin be stamped with your own image; so in every part of your State there may be somewhat new; which by continuance may make the founder and author remembred.[275]

Again, the arguments appear to have merit, but again another counsellor is introduced to rebut them. The fourth counsellor explains that "fame and

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[273] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 289.

[274] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 298; p. 289; p. 290; pp. 290-91.

[275] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 291.

honour" should be regarded as "flowers of well-ordered action" rather than "as good guides". He continues:

> Now if you examine the courses propounded according to these respects, it must be confessed, that the course of wars may seem to encrease power, and the course of contemplations and foundations not to prejudice safety; but if you look beyond the exterior, you shall find that the first breeds weakness, and the latter note peril: for certain it is, during wars, your Excellency will be enforced to your soldiers, and generally to your people, and become less absolute and monarchical than if you reigned in peace; and then if your success be good, that you make new conquests, you shall be constrained to spend the strength of your ancient and settled provinces, to assure you new and doubtful, and become like a strong man, that, by taking a great burden upon his shoulders, maketh himself weaker than he was before.[276]

We may leave the fourth counsellor at this point and move on to the fifth, who adds some fresh objections: "I have heard sundry plats and propositions offered unto you severally: one, to make you a strong Prince; and another to make you a memorable Prince; and a fourth, to make you an absolute Prince; but I hear of no mention to make you a good and virtuous Prince". He suggests that the earlier advice has "taught you to refer all things to yourself, your greatness, memory and advantage". However, the fifth counsellor suggests that the Prince should, first of all, assure himself "of an inward Peace", by utilizing his own virtue to the benefit of the state: "...visit all the parts of your State, and let the balm distil every where from your Sovereign hands, to the medicining of any part that complaineth".[277]

Finally, we hear from the sixth counsellor, whose intent is "perswading Pass-times and Sports":

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[276] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 292.

[277] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 293; p. 293; p. 293; p. 294.

> When I heard, most excellent Prince, the three first of my Lords so careful to continue your fame and memory, methought it was as if a man should come to some young Prince, as yourself is; and immediately after his coronation, be in hand with him to make himself a sumptuous and stately tomb. And, to speak out of my soul, I muse how any of your servants can once endure to think of you as of a Prince past. And for my other Lords, who would engage you so deeply in matters of State; the one perswading you to a more absolute, the other to a more gracious Government; I assure your Excellency, their lessons were so cumbersome, as if they would make you a King in a Play; who when one would think he standeth in great majesty and felicity, he is troubled to say his part. What! nothing but tasks? nothing but working days? No feasting, no music, no dancing, no triumphs, no coomedies, no love, no ladies? If other men's lives be as pilgimages, because they are tied to divers necessities and duties; but Princes' lives are as Progresses, dedicated only to variety and solace.[278]

Following from this the counsellor concludes his argument, stating:

> And therefore, leave your wars to your lieutenants, and your works and buildings to your Surveyors, and your books to your Universities, and your State-matters to your Counsellors, and attend you that in person which you cannot execute by deputy: use the advantage of your youth, be not sullen to your fortune; make your pleasure the distinction of your honours, the studies of your favourites, the talk of your people, and the allurement of all foreign gallants to your Court. And, in a word, sweet Sovereign, dismiss your five Counsellors, and only take Council of your five senses.[279]

Since the sixth has been the final counsellor, and his the final counsel, the prince is left to rebut the argument himself, musing:

> But if a man should follow your five senses (said the Prince) I perceive he might follow your Lordship, now and then, into an

[278] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 295; p. 295.

[279] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 295.

> inconvenience. Your Lordship is a man of a very lively and pleasant advice; which though one should not be forward to follow, yet it fitteth the time, and what our own humour inclined oftentimes to, delight and merriment. For a Prince should be of a chearful and pleasant spirit; not austere, hard-fronted, and stoical; but, after serious affairs, admitting recreation, and using pleasures, as sauces for meats of better nourishment.[280]

After these thoughts, the Prince does not choose one particular course of action, but rather utters a general Answer and Conclusion to the Speeches of the Counsellors:

> My lords, We thank you for your good opinion; which have been so well set forth, as we should think ourselves not capable of good council, if, in so great variety of perswading reasons, we should suddenly resolve. Mean while, it shall not be amiss to make choice of the last, and upon more deliberation to determine of the rest; and what time we spent in long consulting, in the end we will gain by prompt and speedy executing.[281]

And in accordance with the sentiments of this speech, the revels continue.

The conclusion to be drawn from all of this is simply that the Prince was faced with a difficult choice when considering how to govern. On the one hand, he could seek to increase his own fame (through war, learning or the building of institutions etc.); or he could strive to act as generously and virtuously as possible; or finally, a Prince had the choice of satisfying his or her senses by indulging in sports and pastimes.

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[280] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 295.

[281] Nichols, vol. 3, p. 296.

The fact that each course of action can be successfully criticized or rebutted in the above debate, and the fact that the Prince does not, at the debate's end, choose one course of action over another, suggests that each of these blueprints of rule is inherently flawed. That is to say, that a ruler who steadfastly subscribes to one of the above courses of action, whilst ignoring its potential pitfalls, is him/herself a flawed character. Thus, if we think back to the singular counsels presented by the English (War) and the French (Sport) in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, we see that the play conceivably invites us to be critical of both.[282] What, perhaps, is needed when it comes to 'sport' is some balance or moderation. In the following chapter we investigate the ideas of sporting moderation and excess.

[282] The critic Paola Pugliatti has recognized, together with others, the importance of "ambiguity" in Shakespeare's *Henry V*. However, Pugliatti argues that this ambiguity is in fact better labelled "polyphony" and indeed that Shakespeare's methodology of "allowing contradictions to become visible in the telling of history should be considered as a historiographical ... category", is one which "shows an awareness of discrepancies and conflicts, that exposes diverse and diverging ways of viewing...reality and leaves the possibility of various interpretations open...". (Paola Pugliatti, "The Strange Tongues of *Henry V*," pp. 235-53, in *Yearbook of English Studies* (Modern Humanities Research Assn) (23) 1993, p. 239; p. 238; p. 238.

Chapter 5 : Sport -- Moderation and Excess

I shall attempt to show in this chapter that there were real concerns in the English Renaissance that the general populace was exhibiting too great a preoccupation with, or too great an indulgence in, sport. We shall consider literature from the period in which the excess, idleness, and/or profligacy of sport is viewed as problematic to a successful state and even dangerous to the stability of the state itself. We shall see that 'appropriate' levels of sport were supported, and assisted the stabiltity of the State, but that excessive sport was frowned upon because it had the potential to lead to ruin or fall. Importantly, we shall investigate whether tennis could be viewed as either a moderate or excessive sport, and we shall end the chapter with a consideration of the implications of this sporting context for a reading of *Henry V*.

Sport in Moderation: The Context

The following discussion will argue that moderate sport was widely supported in Renaissance England (whereas excessive sport was clearly frowned upon). This can, perhaps, best be seen if we start with a discussion of the most famous book of instruction in the period -- Castliglione's *The*

Book of the Courtier which was translated into English in 1561 by Sir Thomas Hoby. In this work it is clearly indicated that moderate "exercise" is to be one of the desirable attributes of the Courtier. A courtier shall, we are told, ideally, be capable of "all exercise of nimblenesse", he shall "shew strength, lightnesse, and quicknesse, and...have an understanding in all exercises of the bodie that belong to a man of warre". Castiglione considers that he should be able to "handle wel all kinde of weapon, both for footmen and horsemen" and that it would be also beneficial to "know the feat of wrastling".[283]

Castiglione discusses the behaviour of the courtier, including his interest in sport, in its broad social context. He considers that some of the requisite characteristics of the "perfect" courtier may always be considered "good" - including "temperance, valiant courage, health, and all vertues that bring quietnesse to mens mindes" - but others, most notably dancing, singing and "sporting", are only "good" where they "be directed to the good ende they ought to be"; which is to say that they must bring "profit both in peace and war". It seems that Castiglione believes that "sport" for its own sake, "sport" which exists for pleasure rather than profit's sake, is mere

[283] Hoby, p. 39; p. 39; p. 39; p. 39. The critic Gregory Colón Semenza states: "Most Englishmen distinguished between two sorts of sport in the Early Modern period: one lawful and functional, the other disorderly and superfluous" (Gregory M. Colón Semenza, "Recovering the 'two sorts of sport' in early modern English prose", p. 1). Colón Semenza suggests that physical exercise in moderation -for example wrestling, leaping, running etc. - is "functional" and therefore to be regarded as "lawful" because it "helps to prepare men for the hardship of war"(Gregory M. Colón Semenza, "Recovering the 'two sorts of sport' in early modern English prose", p. 2). "Unlawful" sports, in contrast "unlawful" are activities likely to cultivate "profitless and effeminate behaviour" (Gregory M. Colón Semenza, "Recovering the 'two sorts of sport' in early modern English prose", p. 2).

"lightness and vanitie...and in a man of estimation rather to be dispraised than commended".[284]

Moderate Sport for All

Castiglione defends recreation as a natural and necessary condition of humanity:

> ...to describe a man, the common saying is, He is a living creature that can laughe : because this laughing is perceived onely in man, and (in manner) alwaies is a token of a certaine jocondnesse and merry moode that he feeleth inwardly in his minde, which by nature is drawne to pleasantnesse [glossed as amusement], and coveteth quietnesse and refreshing. For which cause we see men have invented manie matters, as sportes, games and pastimes, and so many sundrie sortes of open shewes.[285]

This recreation, says Castiglione, is the province of all classes of society, from "Ploughmen, Mariners, and all such as are inured with hard and boystrous exercises with hand", Philosophers, "holy religious men", and even prisoners, all of whom seek to refresh themselves in some form or another.[286]

The obvious questions which arise from the above are: "How does a man enjoy his pleasure 'as one ought'? To what principles does he refer in order to moderate, limit, regulate that activity?" The simple answer, says a

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[284] Hoby, p. 260; p. 260; p. 261; p. 261; p. 260.

[285] Hoby, p. 137.

[286] Hoby, pp. 137-38.

thinker such as Michel Foucault (in turn citing the views of the philospophers Plato, Xenophon, Diogenes, Antiphon and Aristotle) is that when considering the "domain of pleasure" one must not conceive of "virtue" as a "state of integrity, but as a relationship of domination, a relation of mastery". The virtuous and moderate man will rule his desires and pleasures, will "exercise power over them", or "govern them".[287]

The moderate man, as writes John Northbrooke in 1579, is allowed his "honest, moderate, & good lawful actiue exercises, for recreation & quickning of our dull mindes", recreation "which maketh vs the better and more deuout to serue God":

> honest recreation to mainteine & preserue our vigour & health, or to recouer our strength, or to refreshe vp our spirits, that we may afterward the more cherefully & freshly goe about that businesse, that God hath called vs vnto, and doe it the better, the same in the ende redoundeth in the glorie of GOD, whom we shall by this meanes be more able & ready to serue, & also to seeke our neighbours furtherance & profit.[288]

Immoderate Sport in *Father Hubburd's Tales*: Prodigality and Idleness

In 1598 the Parliament of England enacted a statute which strongly suggests a concern that the state (which, it is claimed, relies for its stability and success upon the productive labour of its people) was in real danger

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[287] Foucault, p. 53; p. 70; p. 70.

[288] Northbrooke, John A Treatise against Idlenes, Idle Pastimes, and Playes [in, Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra. A Treatise wherein Dicing, Daucing, Vaine plaies or Enterludes ... are reprooved ... by Iohn Northbrooke ...], Imprinted ... by Thomas Dawson, for George Bishoppe, 1579.

because labour was not being maintained. Instead, the people were accused of idleness, drunkenness, and too great a participation in sport:

> An Act for the maintenance of tillage and husbandry; for that the strength and flourishing estate of this kingdom hath always been and is upheld by the maintenance of the plough and tillage, being the occasion of the increase and multiplying of the people both for the service in wars and in times of peace, being also a principal mean that they are set on work and thereby withdrawn from idleness, drunkenness, unlawful games and other lewd practices; and by the same means the greater part of the subjects are preserved from extreme poverty in a competent state of maintenance, and the wealth of the realm kept and dispersed in many hands where it is more ready to answer all necessary charges for the service of the realm.[289]

The "strength and flourishing estate of this kingdom", it is said, rests heavily upon the labour of its people. Idleness and excessive sport (excessive time away from work) can only lead to ruin.

The act calls for the populace to take up productive agricultural pursuits and to forego the idle and lewd practices and games which could distract from such endeavours. If the stability and prosperity of the realm were seen to rest upon the labour of the people, then such advice seems prudent and sensible.

A complication arises, however, when we shift our gaze away from the actions of the labourers and toward those of the rich and powerful. If labourers were to be encouraged away from "idleness, drunkenness, and

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[289] (10th February 1598. "A Note of the Chief Statutes Enacted by the Late Parliament'. Harrison, pp.255-56 citing Short Title Catalogue, 9493, etc.)

unlawful games" for the good of the realm, then how was one to justify the continuing excesses and extravagances of the rich and powerful?

One might argue that such behaviour is allowable if one is of the right class, and conclude that: "Perhaps the most important basis for the discriminating treatment of recreational practices was the accepted, long-standing distinction between a life of leisure, which was a perquisite of gentility, and a life of onerous and involuntary labour, which was a mark of a plebeian existence. For gentlemen recreation was a natural and legitimate part of their culture; for labouring men it was (or could easily become) a dangerous temptation, a distraction from their primary concerns. 'To be born for no other Purpose than to consume the Fruits of the Earth', wrote Henry Fielding, 'is the Privilege (if it may be really called a Privilege) of very few. The greater Part of Mankind must sweat hard to produce them, or Society will no longer answer the Purposes for which it was ordained.'" [290]

There is some truth in this, of course, but it does not completely mitigate against the fact that inequality between rich and poor, the conspicuous luxury and equally conspicuous hardship of each estate, was starkly illustrated in Elizabethan England: "The vast difference between the life of a gentleman and that of the poor" was obvious to all. The nobility lived a luxurious lifestyle which

> could be justified in Shakespeare's lifetime ... by the theory that gentle blood involved real virtue, carrying obligations as well as appropriate privileges. [However] To some extent ostentation and

[290] Malcolmson, p. 157, quoting Henry Fielding, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers* (London, 1751), p. 7.

> prodigality could be confused with the obligation to 'generosity' and 'hospitality' which was part of the ideal of gentility....[291]

That is, luxury and privilege were acceptable in the context that the Nobility performed some servive to the State that only they could perform – which historically included defending the realm, and providing welfare and hospitality to the people. The difficulty lay in determining when, exactly, 'generosity' had become merely pleasure-seeking. Luxurious living might, on the one hand, be seen as generosity to one's household, one's visitors, even one's suppliers, but, on the other hand, might equally well be seen as profligacy.[292]

In light of the above, we shall consider Thomas Middleton's *Father Hubburd's Tales* (1604), in which the sport of the young gallants, with its attendant profligacy and idleness, was evidently viewed as dangerous to the State.

In Middleton's *Father Hubburd's Tales*, a moral beast-fable, the hero of the tale, an ant, bemoans "the ruin of all painful husbandmen about me, began by the prodigal downfall of my young landlord, whose father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, for many generations had been lords of the town wherein I dwelt, and many other towns near adjoining".[293] The moral is directed towards young heirs, who have become "accustomed to wild and unfruitful company about the court and London"[294] and as a result have

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[291] Joseph, p. 76; p. 77.

[292] Joseph, p. 80; pp. 80-1.

[293] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 65.

[294] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 66.

abandoned the country, their father's servants and tradition, in order to follow their tastes for a prodigal city lifestyle.[295]

Graham Parry extends the argument by recognizing that for many a "London lifestyle" meant time at "Court": "the sheer wastefulness of the Court and its wanton superfluities", the way in which "the nobility and the fashionable gentry" converted "their real wealth from land and property into an ephemeral display of costume, feasting and general ostentation" in order to maintain their status at Court, was recognized not merely as immoral "but was also seen to be destroying the economic stability of the country".[296]

This idle London lifestyle posed a very real threat to the order and prosperity of the realm. The labouring ant suggests that "our young landlord [was] accoutred in such a strange and prodigal shape, that it amounted to above two years' rent in apparel". Moreover the ant is critical of the taste for expensive foreign fashion because it "drunk up the price of all my plough-land in very pearl...". It is apparent from the above that there is a great difference between the perceived productivity of labourers and gentlemen. The ant, in the following address to his landlord's serving-man, summarizes this difference, again highlighting the threat posed by the prodigal behaviour of the upper classes: "...there is a difference between the sweat of a ploughman and the sweat of a gentleman, as much as between your master's apparel and mine, for when we sweat, the land

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[295] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 66.

[296] [illegible] Parry, [illegible] (Manchester: Manchester University Press, [illegible]), p. 61.

prospers, and the harvest comes in; but when a gentleman sweats, I wot how the gear goes then".[297]

The threat to the prevailing social order which might arise from such unproductive "sweat" -- sweat from sport -- is expressed succinctly and unambiguously in *Father Hubburd's Tales*: "...young dicing landlords...pass away three hundred acres with three dice in a hand, and after the decease of so much land in money become sons and heirs of bawdy-houses...".[298]

Similarly, Middleton's *The Black Book* (1604), satirizes London gallants, by describing them "sweating as much at dice as many poor labourers do with the casting of ditches".[299] Such satiric description of the upper classes was by no means rare in the period. In fact, sweating at sport, sometimes at dice, but commonly at tennis,[300] is often contrasted with the sweat of more honest or honourable labour. Indeed, idleness is defined to *include* excessive sport:

> You must learne to distinguishe this worde (Idlenesse) as Saint Augustine teacheth you, saying: *Est otium desidiæ, & otium cogitationis*, that is: There is idlenesse of sitting still, and there is idlenesse of meditations. ...That is: There is a beastly and slouthful idlenesse, which idle persons get to themselues, not for labours, but for pleasures & delights. There is also an honest and a necessarie idlenesse, whereby good men are made more apt and ready to do their labours and vocations, where vnto they are called. This kinde of idlenesse, God doth not onely persuade, but also commaundeth

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[297] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 71; p. 70; pp. 73-74.

[298] Thomas Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales: or the Ant, and the Nightingale* (1604), pp. 47-110 in A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1964), 8 vols, vol. 8, p. 64.

[299] Thomas Middleton, *The Black Book* (1604), pp. 1-46, in A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1964), 8 vols., vol. 8, pp. 29-30.

[300] See, for example, Dekker's *The Guls Horn-Booke*, p. 240.

> it in his lawe, in that he appoynted the Sabboth day, and commaunded that in it, not only man shoulde rest, but the beastes also. Let vs then be idle, not for carnal pleasures, as the wicked and vngodlie are woonte, but for godlinesse and vertues sake.

In fact, the sloth of courtiers and the nobility -- a sloth that manifested itself in prodigal sports -- could even be regarded one of the greatest problems facing the realm :

> But alas! If these were the sorest diseases (Thou noblest City of the now-noblest Nation) that Idlenes does infect thee with Thou hast Phisick sufficient in thy selfe, to purge thy bodie of them. No, no, hee is not slothfull, that is onelye lazie, that onely wastes his good houres, and his Siluer in Luxury, & licentious ease, or that onely (like a standing water) does nothing, but gather corruption: no, hee is the true Slothfull man that does no good. And how many would crie Guiltie unto thee, if this/ were there Inditement?[301]

Rather than work, the privileged youth of London seem to prefer vain exercise: In *The Puritaine: or, The Widow of Watling-Street* we hear:

> *Wid.* How now, Simon? Where's my son Edmund?
>
> *Sim.* Verily madame, hee is at vaine Exercise, dripping in the Tennis-court.
>
> *Wid.* At Tennis-court? oh, now his father's gon, I shall have no rule with him; oh wicked Edmond, I might well compare this with the Prophecie in the Chronicle, tho farre inferior: as Harry of Monmouth woone all, and Harry of Windsor lost all; so Edmund of Bristow, that was the Father, got all, and Edmund of London, that's his sonne now, will spend all.

[301] Dekker, *The Seuen Deadly Sinnes of London*, p. 53.

> *Sir Godf.* Peace Sister, weele have him reformed, there's hope on him yet, tho it be but a little. (II.i.71-84)[302]

Clearly many Renaissance authors were critical of such free spending and idle youth; Thomas Nashe writes:

> These whelpes of the first lytter of Gentilitie, these Exhalations, drawen vp to the heauen of Honour, from the dunghill of abiect fortune, haue long been on horsebacke to come riding to your Diuelship: but I know not how lyke Saint George they are alwaies mounted, but neuer moue. Here they out-face Towne and Countrey, and doo nothing but bandie factions with their betters. Their bigge limbes yeeld the Common-wealth no other seruice but idle sweate, and their heads like rough hewen Gloabes, are fit for nothing but to be the blockhouses for sleepe. (pp. 19-20)[303]

The expensive sports of the young landlord, the expenses of court and London living, are seen as the primary reason for the new imposts -- rising rents -- demanded of the labourers. And there was much to be critical of with demands from landlords that tenants sign leases for their land, and pay "fines": "But that word *fines* was no fine word, methought, to please poor labouring husbandmen, that can scarce sweat out so much in a twelvemonth as he would demand in a twinkling".

The ant of *Father Hubburd's Tales* describes the rural fortunes of ploughmen: "how miserable, wretched, and full of oppression they were, all husbandmen's brows can witness, that are fined with more sweat still year by year" and in doing so encapsulates the labourers' complaint against an

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[302] Anon. (Elizabethan), *The Puritaine: or the Widow of Watling Street*, London: Printed for P. C, 1664.

[303] Nash, Thomas, 1567-1601, Pierce Penilesse (1592) Imprinted by Richard Ihones [etc.], 1592

undisciplined aristocracy. As the labourers' representative the ant pointedly suggests that the increasing rents are responsible for an increasing lowliness in the labouring classes: "the word *fines* went off with such a powder, that the force of it blew us all into the country, quite changed our ploughmen's shapes, and so we became little ants again".[304]

It is evident, from the above discussion, that the people see themselves as working harder, sweating more, to pay rents which are rising for no good reason. The displeasure of the labouring classes was undoubtedly heightened by the fact that these higher rents -- used to pay for the city pleasures of the aristocracy -- had the unfortunate and somewhat ironic effect of depriving the workers of their own pleasures:

> We plodded home to our ploughs, carrying these heavy news to our wives both of the prodigality of our old landlord's son, as also of our oppressions to come by the burden of uncharitable fines. And...do but imagine now what a sad Christmas we all kept in the country, without either carols, wassail-bowls, dancing of Sellender's round, in moonshine nights about May-poles, shoeing the mare, hoodman-blind, hot-cockles, or any of our old Christmas gambols; no, not so much as choosing king and queen on twelfth night: such was the dulness of our pleasures, - for that one word *fines* robbed us of all our fine pastimes.[305]

Middleton's ant, in his guise of labourer, leaves us with one unmistakable message: this being that the sports of the young gallants directly, and adversely, impinge upon the sports -- and the lives -- of the labourers.

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[304] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 68; p. 85; p. 85.

[305] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 80-81.

In Middleton's fable, the heroes are the ants, "busy-toiling ants", a community of "busy brethren" who only take their rest after their "day's true labour" is done. The difference between the labouring ants and those creatures who do not earn a living through toil is to be seen at night's fall: "All beasts took rest that liv'd by labouring toil;/ Only such rang'd as had delight in spoil".[306] Night is naturally a time of rest for the worker, but a time of "spoil" for others. It seems to me that such a distinction has negative implications for a Court -- comprising society's great -- which enjoyed its revels long into the night. Such nocturnal activity might easily beguile the unwary, as expressed in one of Middleton's works, *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity*:

> Like clocks on revelling nights, that ne'er go right.
> Because the sports may yield more full delight,
> But when they break off, then they find it late,
> The time and truth appears...[307]

The message is one of the dangers of "excess"; it is dangerous to lose oneself in excessive sport. It seems that in both *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity* and *Father Hubburd's Tales*, Middleton is suggesting that the aristocracy regulate their inappropriate sporting activity. This message was by no means a new one. In fact, as early as 1576, George Whetstone, in his "*Fiftie apples of admonition, late growing on the tree of good gouerment*", counsels: "Use exercise with such a meane, as workes your bodies wealth,/

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[306] Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 56; p. 57; p. 57; p. 56.

[307] Middleton, *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity* (London, 1617), in A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1964) 8 vols, vol.7, pp. 309-32, pp. 318-19.

And too much toyle doth hinder strength, & sloth impayreth health...".[308] For Whetstone, knowing how to use recreation -- or exercise -- appropriately, that is, neither neglecting it, nor indulging too much, is an important part of "good gouerment". Interestingly, where *Father Hubburd's Tales* has bemoaned the diminished status of the soldier and scholar and has also been concerned with an aristocratic aversion to "labour", Whetstone's verse on government, which only runs to 58 lines, also treats precisely these matters:

> Three sorts of men, with speciall care, salue yor their needy griefe,
> The scholer forced from his booke, abroad to seeke reliefe.
> The souldier spoyled in ye wars, whose hassard works your peace,
> And next he simple husbandman, who toyles for your increase.[309]

It seems that Whetstone's position, in 1576, is not so different from that found in *Father Hubburd's Tales* in 1604. In each, there is a sentiment that labour is not receiving the merit it deserves -- be that the labour of the soldier, the scholar, or the husbandman. Instead, we might argue, returning to the earlier part of Whetstone's verse, the nation has failed to find an appropriate "meane" in is pursuit of "exercise".

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[308] George Whetstone, "*Fiftie apples of admonition, late growing on the tree of good gouerment*" (1576), (ll. 7,8), from "The Rocke of Regard" (London: Ihon Shepperd, 1576).

[309] Whetstone, (ll. 53-56).

We have seen in *Father Hubburd's Tales* that it is the industry of the masses and the sport (the lack of industry) of the aristocratic classes which takes centre stage. Such issues -- issues of excess and moderation -- have currency in the later Jacobean period also.

King James's Support for Moderate Sport

Evidently the issue of excessive versus moderate sport was one that King James himself felt obliged to comment upon. The extent of James's support for moderate sport is apparent from a Royal proclamation, issued in 1618, which became known as *The Book of Sports*.[310] The work is illuminating, because it shows the king defending sport against its detractors, who saw some justification for restricting holiday recreation on the grounds of law and order, "the high spirits of the apprentices and their formidable numbers made street riots a constant occurrence, especially on holidays".[311] Moreover, even apparently harmless activities such as bowling (a game prohibited to the lower classes alongside tennis) were accompanied "by

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[310] *The King's Book of Sports* was first issued by James I as a royal proclamation in 1618, published as James I of England, *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports to be used,* (London: Printed by Bonham Norton and John Bill, Deputie Printers for the Kings most Excellent Majestie, 1618), and subsequently reissued in 1633 by Charles I. References to *The King's Book of Sports* in this thesis are taken (unless otherwise noted) from, James I of England, *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports to be used,* (London: Printed by Bonham Norton and John Bill, Deputie Printers for the Kings most Excellent Majestie, 1618), published in facsimile by Da Capo Press, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* Amsterdam, 1970, no. 243 in The English Experience series. I use the more common title *The Book of Sports* throughout the main body of my argument, but revert to the title *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports* in the footnotes. This is necessary to avoid confusion with L. A. Govett's *The King's Book of Sports*.

[311] *The King's Book of Sports*, p. 64.

gambling, drinking and swindling" when played by the "idle and vicious classes".[312] Thus, from the point of view of the judges, festive gatherings, like church wakes and ales, bred only drunkenness and disorder; and in fact such assemblies were suppressed to varying degrees in the years 1595, 1599, 1615, 1627, and banned altogether by the Lord Chief Justice Richardson in 1632.[313] (At which point -- in order to counteract Justice Richardson's declaration -- Charles reissued his father's *Book of Sports.*)

Some defence of moderate sport was also needed on the grounds that the populace typically only had time for sport on Sundays and on religious holidays. Since the times of the Anglo-Saxon Kings, laws had existed stipulating that Sunday was to be a day of rest: "These were extended by their successors, and Richard II., in 1388, forbade servants and labourers to play at tennis and other games on Sunday, with the exception that archery was always to be lawful". Furthermore, in the earlier part of James I's reign "lawful bodily labour" was prohibited on that day, except in such cases of necessity as harvest times. And Queen Elizabeth, too, had, in 1559, directed her religious officers to "teach and declare unto the people that they may with a safe and quiet conscience after their common prayer in time of harvest labour upon the holy and festival days, and save that thing which God has sent".[314]

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[312]Govett, p. 89, p. 88.

[313] Govett, p. 102.

[314] *The King's Book of Sports*, p. 19; p. 19; p. 25.

With this in mind, James, in *The Book of Sports*, set forth a list of the "lawfull sports" to be used in his realm. The following list, taken from the treatise, makes it clear which types of activities should be encouraged:

> ...dauncing, either men or women, Archerie for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other such harmlesse Recreation...May-Games, Whitson Ales, and Morris-dances, and the setting up of Maypoles and other sports therewith used...[315]

In opposition to this, the following must still be considered "unlawfull games" (and by implication, a threat to the state):

> We doe here accompt still as prohibited all unlawfull games to bee used upon Sundayes onely, as Beare and Bull-baitings, Interludes, and at all times in the meaner sort of People by Law prohibited, Bowling. (James I of England, *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, pp. 7, 8).

The intent of *The Book of Sports*, it seems, was to clarify some previously expressed words regarding "lawfull Recreations" and prevent the "mistaking and misinterpretation of Our meaning" by "Papists and Puritaines".[316] The first thing to be noted is that in this pamphlet, as in Cotgrave's dictionary (quoted in a previous chapter), "sport" and "recreation" are largely interchangeable terms; the second thing to note is that "sport" can clearly be seen to be invested with political (and religious) significance.

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[315] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 7.

[316] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 2.

The religious significance of the publication becomes evident when we consider that when James talks of "sport" or of "lawfull recreation", he is speaking of the pastimes, the "honest exercises", permitted to his subjects "upon Sundayes and other Holy dayes, after the afternoone Sermon or Service".[317] For, as he notes, "...when shal the common people have leave to exercise, if not upon the Sundayes and Holydayes, seeing they must apply their labour, and winne their living in all working dayes?".[318] The King makes the point that after a subject has fulfilled his responsibilities to the commonwealth (by working), and to his/her God (through religious observances), then "sport" is lawful. Moreover, the King makes this point as the foremost representative of the Protestant church, noting that both "Papists" and "Puritaines" have been guilty of barring the populace from lawful recreations. According to James, the Papists discourage the populace from Protestantism by "perswading them that no honest mirth or recreation is lawfull or tollerable in Our Religion".[319] Indeed, he suggests that the issue of allowing his prescribed lawful recreations is some sort of a litmus test to his authority, describing those who oppose such recreation as "condemners of Our Authoritie, and adversaries of Our Church".[320]

The publication of *The Book of Sports* shows that James not only considered moderate sport as "lawful", but also as proper as it ultimately could have great utility for the state, since "such exercises...may make their [the people's] bodies more able for Warre, when Wee or Our Successors shall

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[317] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 2.

[318] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 5.

[319] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 4.

[320] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 6.

have occasion to use them".[321] In fact, for James, a *lack* of such activity "sets up filthy tiplings and drunkennesse, and breeds a number of idle and discontented speaches in their [the common people's] Alehouses".[322] From the above, it is evident that James supports appropriate sport and recreation on the multiple grounds that "such exercise" encourages the common people toward the state-sponsored religion, prepares them for service in the state's armies, and, moreover, prevents the people from falling into drunkenness, idleness, or sedition. At this point one might conclude that the King is fully supportive of the role of sport in the realm, seeing it as an important force for the maintenance of a healthy and stable state and this was an belief which is in evidence well into the next decade also. Generally, it was the "orderliness" of the the populace which was potentially threatened by "sports". However, in contrast Bishop Pier's *Report on Somerset Parish Feasts*, 1633 defended the "decency, orderliness, [and] value" of such sporting activity. In fact, the Bishop, like James I, went so far as to argue that such sports were positively beneficial to social order in that: "...if the people should not have their honest and lawful recreations upon Sundays after evening prayer, they would go either into tippling houses, and there upon their ale-benches talk of matters of the church or state, or else into conventicles".[323]

Insofar as *The Book of Sports* suggests that the "lawful" use of "sport" prevents seditious thoughts in an otherwise idle populace, we can see that "sport" is beneficial to the realm. Furthermore, "sport", as the king defines

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[321] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, p. 4.

[322] *The Kings Majesties Declaration to His Subjects, concerning lawfull Sports*, pp. 4-5.

[323] Bishop Peir cited in David Cressy and Lori Anne Ferrell (eds.), *Religion and Society in Early Modern England: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.148; p. 150.

it, represents legitimate recreation for a dutiful citizenry, a citizenry who worked hard for their country and their God on six of the seven days of the week.

In *The Book of Sports*, James is in essence advocating the moderate use of "sport" in his realm. This was also the position he took in another, earlier, work, the *Basilikon Doron*.[324] This treatise was written in 1598, whilst James was still enthroned in Scotland, and was intended as counsel for the young prince Henry. In the *Basilikon Doron* James pointedly counsels that exercises (including tennis) are only desirable when practised in moderation:

> ...the exercises I would have you vse (although but moderately, not making a craft of them) are running, leaping, wrastling, fencing, and playing at the caitch or tennise, archerie, palle maille, and such like other faire and pleasant field-games.[325]

It is the idea of "moderation" which is important here, especially given that James's court later became notorious for its excess and licentiousness.

Objecting to Excessive Sport

The types of objections raised by the opponents of sporting indulgence, or excess, in Renaissance England are summarized in Philip Stubbes's *The*

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[324] *The Basilikon Doron* was reprinted in 1599, and also in 1616 as part of James's collected works. Reproduced in Charles Howard McIlwain (intro. and ed.), *The Political Works of James I* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918; reissued 1965), pp. 3-52. All subsequent quotation from *The Basilikon Doron* is taken from this edition unless otherwise stated.

[325] *The Basilikon Doron*, p. 48.

Anatomy of Abuses (1583). Stubbes claims that the corrupt "exercises" of the time (and we shall see that his term "exercises" corresponds with our definition of "sport") are in need of reform:

> I would not have thee so, to take me, as though my speeches tended, to the overthrow and utter disliking of all kind of exercises in general : that is nothing my simple meaning. But the particular Abuses, which are crept into every one of these severall exercises, is the only thing, which I think worthy of reprehesion.[326]

If we look to Stubbes's Preface we see that he allows each "exercise" -- be it dancing, gaming, or the ball game of bowls -- only where it first, does not intrude upon the Sabbath; secondly, where it does not lead to vice - "wantoness and sin"; and thirdly, where man undertakes such pursuits sparingly as "Godly recreation" rather than excessively as idle occupation. Take the particular example of gaming: "...if a man make (as it were) an occupation of it, spending both his time and goods therein, frequenting, gaming houses, bowling alleys, and other such places, for greediness of lucre, to him it is an exercise altogether discommendable and unlawful".[327]

Stubbes, then, has much to say on the issue of moderate "exercising". It is only when moderation gives way to excess that ruin is likely to ensue.

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[326] Preface to Philip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses*, 1583, unpaginated. Orthography modernized.

[327] Stubbes, unpaginated.

Sabbatarianism

The above argument -- that Renaissance audiences considered moderate sport to be acceptable and excessive sport to be unacceptable -- is, whilst true, somewhat problematised by Sabbatarianism. An extreme Sabbatarianist, like John Norden, might consider *any* sport practised on the Sabbath as excessive (and therefore unacceptable):

> It seemeth lawful (for it is tolerated) that every man at his pleasure may leave his travail and go to the play-house, bowling alleys, bear-gardens, alehouses, taverns, and gaming, where they lose their time, consume their thrift, and offend the laws of God and her majesty. And the Sabbath day, which should be sanctified with prayer and hearing of the Word, is profaned with these accustomed evils; which if they were cast out as unprofitable in this our earthly abiding-place, we should the more sweetly pass on the way to our heavenly heart's ease.[328]

A staunchly Puritanical position might, then, disallow all sport, but, as we saw above, other -- more moderate -- moralists like Stubbes are able to conceive of a framework in which moderate sport is acceptable.

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[328] John Norden in a *Progress of Piety*, 1596-97, quoted in A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, 8 vols (New York: AMS Press, 1964), vol. 8, p. 98n.

Court Tennis - Excessive Sport?

In support of Court Tennis, Randle Holme's *Academy of Armory* (1688) has the following to say:

> The Game at Tennis is a most Princely Exercise; having its first Original (as I have been informed) or brought over to us from the French Court; it is a Gentile, Cleanly, Active, an most ingenious Recreation, exercising all the parts of the Body; therefore for its Excellency is much approved of, and Played by most Nations in Europe, especially by our Gallants of England, where such Tennis Courts are Built.[329]

This glowing recommendation for the game shows us that its pejorative associations were not noted by all. Instead, as James had done in 1598 in the *Basilikon Doron*, Holme recommends the game as good exercise. Other, earlier authors similarly saw the benefits of tennis. For instance, Richard Mulcaster in his *Positions...for the training up of children* of 1581 considers tennis and other games with the little hand-ball as some of "the best exercises and the greatest preservatives of health".[330] And the health benefits of the sport were also lauded by Andrew Borde: "...before you go to your reflection, moderately exercyse your body with some labour, or

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[329] Holme, p. 264.

[330] Richard Mulcaster, *The training up of children* (London, 1581), published in facs., The English Experience, No. 339 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), p. 103.

playing at the tennys, or casting a bowle...to open your poores, and to augment naturall hete".[331]

Moreover, it was not necessarily only one's health which was improved through tennis play, but ostensibly even one's courage: "...the use of the little ball doth plant in the minde courage, in the body health, in all timmes a trim & wel proportionate constitution: so it be moderately & advisedly executed".[332]

Indeed, participation in such a vigorous sport was considered by some, including Castiglione, as beneficial in improving the body's agility: "Also it is a noble exercise, and meete for one living in Court to play at Tenise, where the disposition of the bodie, the quicknes and nimblenesse of everie member is much perceived, and almost whatsoever a man can see in all other exercises".[333] James would have undoubtably approved of this, given his advice (in the *Book of Sports*), as quoted above, that the people utilize exercise to "make their bodies more able for Warre, when Wee or Our Successors shall have occasion to use them".

However, despite the above support for the game, and despite the fact that, in 1620, "Tennis and other games" could be described as "Honest Recreation" in a document granting Clement Cotterell management rights

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[331] A. Borde, *The breuiary of helthe* London, 1547 The English Experience, No. 362 (New York, Da Capo Press, 1971), unpaginated.

[332] Mulcaster, p. 103.

[333] Hoby, p. 42.

to London's "fowerteene Tennis Courtes", and despite the fact that those who indulged sang the praises of the sport as, legitimately, good exercise as evidenced in the preface to an early work:

> Despise not to glance within, I do beseech you,
> Though you be learned, still this book can teach you
> The joys of tennis and keep you free from vice,
> Taking your pleasures in sweet exercise,[334]

these games appear to have been typically regarded rather less favorably. The exesses of those playing appear typically to have undone the potential benefits of the sport.

Acts in the sixteenth century stress that such games (and gaming houses) were to be discouraged because they were practised "by ydle & misruled prsons repairing to such places, of the wch Robberies...have ensued". It might be noted that the prohibitions against tennis were class specific: in 1541-2 an Act was passed (Statutes of the Realm, 33 Henry VIII., cap. 9 (1541-2)) in which playing tennis was declared illegal, upon pain of a fine of 20 shillings, but this same statute allowed "that it shall be lawfull to everie Nobleman and other, havinge manors lands tenmets or other yerelye prfitts for terme of lyef in his owne right or in his wyeffs righte to the yerelye value of a hundred pounds or above, to comaunde appoynte or licence by his or their discreton his or their servaunts or famylye of his or their house or houses for to playe, within the prcyncte of his or their houses Gardens or Orchardes, at Cardes Dyce Tables Bowles or tennis". The prescribed punishments for indulging in such pastimes varied ; in 1477 "Item, Whereas by the Laws of this Land no Person should use any unlawful Games [or

[334] Nicholas Guiet, *Pila Palmaria* (1598) quoted in De Luze, p. 27.

Pleys] as Dice, Coits, Tenis, and such like Games...upon Pain to have Imprisonment of Three Years, and to forfeit and lose for every Offence, xx li"; however, just three years later the punishment was not nearly so severe: "...no labourer Servante nor Apprentice of any suche Artificer or Vitiller or any other man take uppon hym nor be so hardy to pley the Tenys Caills Clossh ffoteball or use disyng or Cardyng or other like gammes wit'in this citee of London or ye libtie of the same uppon payn of Imprsonment by the space of vj daies as is aforehercerd but that thei use shotyng or other semblable games -- Which be not prhibet nor for boden by the Kyng oure souraign lords lawes". By 1495 the punishment had dwindled to "...imprisonment by the space of a day in the Stokkis openly".[335]

Authors compared the tennis court with other places of ill repute; Thomas Tomkis, for example, writes: "I/...sought you in euery Ale-house, Inne, Tauerne,/ Dicing-house, Tennis-court, Stewes, and such like places,/ likely to find your worship in".[336] Moralists regarded such places as corrupting of body and soul; George Wither saw tennis-courts and theatres as equally corrupt:

> Our *Theatres*, our *Tavernes*, *Tennis-courts*,
> And gaming houses...
> Where we with Pestilences of the soule
> Each other had polluted and made foule,
> Our bodies were infected.[337]

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[335] Marshall, p. 214; p. 214; p. 213; p. 121; p. 212, pp. 212-13.

[336] Thomas Tomkis, *Lingua: Or The Combat of the Tongue, And the five Senses For Superiority. A pleasant Comoedie* (London: Printed by G. Eld, for Simon Waterson, 1607) first performed 1602-1607, III. Iv. 11-13.

[337] George Wither, *Brittan's Remembrancer*, [from *Britain's Remembrancer* (1628)], Imprinted...and are to be solde by John Grismond [etc.], The fourth *Canto*, ll. 393-401.

By 1616 tennis can even be found as a motif for courtly pecadillos; in "...pallaces, and princely bowers", we are told

> ...Venus sports are like to tennis balles,
> Bandied from one to tother: till it falles
> Into the hazards of their honord names,
> The chases lost are rumors and defames:[338]

For whatever reason, banging balls back and forth seemed an apt metaphor for courtly sexual excess at this time.

Other authors, notably the English moralist Philip Stubbes writing in the 1580s, included tennis amongst other games such as Dice, Chess, and Bowles, identifying each of these with vain earthly pursuits capable of spoiling, "body and soul for ever": "As for cards, dice, tables, bowls, tennisse, and such like, they are *furta officiosa,* a certen kind of smooth, deceiptfull, and sleighie thefte, wherby many a one is spoiled of all that ever he hath, sometimes of his like withall, yea, of body and soul for ever." [339]

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[338] Robert Anton, 'THE PHYLOSOPHERS FIFT Satyr of Venus', (1. 187; ll. 189-92) in *The philosophers satyrs* (1616), Printed by T. C. and B. A. for Roger Iackson [etc.]

[339] Philip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakespeare's youth,* A.D. 1583 New Shakespeare Society Publications, Series 6, Vol 12, p. 33. In this, Stubbes is typical of the more moderate moralists and reformers who have, as Robert Malcomson recognises "seldom been fully satisfied with the character or consequences of people's pastimes (especially those of the common people) ...[with]... many of their works are found to include an abundance of allusions to the evils and inconveniences which were thought to be associated with recreational practices" (Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society,* p. 5). Stubbes, rehearses, in his work a standard catalogue of "abuses" in which recreation is seen to be "distracting men from more useful activities", where gatherings could degenerate into "occasions of drunkenness, brawling, and indecent revelry; and sporting contests...were sometimes the cause of riot and bloodshed", and, finally, in which excessive recreation also becomes a source of distraction from religious observance (Robert W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society,* p. 5; p. 5).

Writers, including Roger Sharpe, bemoaned tennis as a corruption of an excessive court; in his work *A Rare Man in Action* (1610) Sharpe describes a tennis-playing courtier:

> But why doth Friuolous that actiue squire,
> (Hauing abjured the Tenniscourt) retyre
> Againe unto that sport, is't for his pleasure,
> Or to recouer there some spending treasure
> Or is it that his humor verifies.
> It is a Gentleman-like exercise:
> Or may it be as some perhaps may brute,
> There to discouer his new Sattin sute.
> No sir you misconiecture his intent,
> For none of these, the sport he doth frequent:
> But if youle knowe the truth, sir understand
> He comes to shew the wonders of his hand.
> How that by force of arme and Tennis-ball,
> To admiration he untopt the wall:
> He is no vulgar fellow in his tricks,
> Where others bandie Balls, he bandies Bricks
> And he is thither drawne by one thing more,
> For to augment his credit on the score.[340]

The above passage implies that the tennis was seen, by some, as a means to monetary gain -- a way to "recover some spending treasure" -- as a gentlemanly pursuit, and as a place to display both clothing and skill. As the squire's name suggests, the pursuit was regarded as frivolous.

Anthony Munday (1560-1633), for instance, in his *The Paine of pleasure, describing in a perfect mirror, the miseries of man to learne a foolish play,*

[340] Roger Sharpe, "A rare man in action", in *More fooles yet* (1610) (London: Printed for Thomas Castleton [etc.], 1610) ll. 1-18.

describes the game as follows, demonstrating that the criticism of the game was levelled partly on the basis of exorbitance or excess:

'Tennis, The twelft pleasure.'
What sport is it to cut a Ball in kinde,
Or strike a Ball into the hazard fine:
Or bandie Balles, to flie against the winde,
Or strike a ball low, leuell ore the line.
Or make a chase or hazard for a game,
Then with a brickle wall to winne the same.

Oh braue delightes, but he that thinkes upon
The vnknowne charge that groweth by the same,
Will say when once his store of coyne is gone,
Of all sportes, Tennis is a costly game.
Which cost considered, soone will driue away,
The deere delight that growes by Tennis play.
Yet will I not dispraise the Tennis so,
That I would wish no man should vse the same.
For by the game no hurt is like to grow,
Except a man doe too much vse the same.
For I would have it usde for exercise:
In some cold mornings, and not othewise.

And as of Tennis, so againe I finde:
In other sportes, as shooting, bowling too
Wherein too many, so much set their minde
As all day long they little els can doe.[341]

[341] Anthony Munday, "The Paine of pleasure, describing in a perfect mirror, the miseries of man to learne a foolish play", London: Printed by J. C. for Edwarde White [etc.], 1588). ll. 769-802. The idea that tennis in moderation was benefical to the health seems to have been a common one. King James I included "caitche or tennise" (in moderation) amongst exercises recommended for the young Prince (Julian Marshall, *The Annals of Tennis*, p. 54) and Thomas Elyot in *The Book Named the Governor* (first edition 1531) sees fit to name "tenyse" amongst those exercises "necessary for every gentilman" (Book 1: p. 62, 63) (Thomas Elyot. *The Boke Named the Governor* (Menston: The Scolar Press, 1970) a facsimile of the first edition, 1531).

Munday suggests that the game, in moderation, is beneficial to the health, but in excess proves costly, both in monetary terms and as a frivolous waste of time.

On the issue of tennis as emblematic of wasted time and effort, Erasmus, (earlier in the English Renaissance) had made a pun on the word "net" (using the Latin "*reticulum*"): he says, in his *Colloquies*, that a tennis racket is a net which will catch no fish: "*Reticulum piscatoribus relinquamus: elegantius est palma uti*" (1527).[342] A seventeenth century Dutch emblem (1614) which shows a hand emerging from the clouds holding a tennis racket puts the matter equally as poetically; the motto to this emblem reads: "The net that catches no fish".[343] The 'net' here is, again, the tennis racket, and the moral is that this type of net leads to no gain. In these cases the 'excess' is an excess of inactivity, idleness, and wasted effort. And, generally, it was the case that the sport of tennis did come to represent wasted effort, or wasted time. We can see this from the sixteenth century emblem tradition: the critic Michael Bath states that "one of the received meanings -- the commonplaces of moral signification -- which the game of tennis had attracted by the end of the sixteenth century was an emblem of 'wasted time'". To illustrate the point, we need only repeat an example from Bath, taken from Barthélemy Aneau's *Picta Poesis*, (Lyon, 1552) in which the motto to the tennis scene, translates as "Great, but useless effort".[344] Bath then quotes from a further sixteenth century emblem book -- Johannes Sambucus (*Emblemata*:

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[342] Erasmus, p. 629.

[343] Michael Bath, "Tennis in the Emblem Books," in L. St. J. Butler and P. J. Wordie (eds.). *The Royal Game* (Stirling: Falkland Palace Real Tennis Club, 1989), p. 58.

[344] Bath, p. 53.

Antwerp, 1564) -- which also shows tennis as emblematic of "futile effort or wasted time".[345]

Excesses in playing tennis can appear in literature as indicative of excesses in the Royal court. In Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV Prince Henry, in a scene which concerns itself with appropriate appearances and Poins's extravagence, says:

> What a disgrace it is to me to remember thy name, or to know thy face to-morrow, or to take note how many pairs of silk stockings thou hast -viz., these and those that were the peach-colour'd ones - or to bear the inventory of thy shirts - as, one for superfluity, and another for use! But that the tennis-court-keeper knows better than I; for it is a low ebb of linen with thee when thou keepest not racket there. (2 Henry4: 2.ii.11-15)

Tennis, in excess, was a game for vain courtiers on the one hand, but more than this the courtier who spent his time playing the game was regarded as morally corrupt: "The first place in a Lord's affection? very good;/ and how long doth that last? Perhaps some changing of/ some three shirts in the Tennis court".[346]

A contemporary description of the sporting pursuits of James' eldest son, Prince Henry-Frederic, is also damning -- on the grounds of excess -- of the young Prince's taste for tennis:

> Oftimes he would run at the Ring, and sometimes at the Tilt, both of which he so well performed, and with so great a Comeliness, as, in those his first Years, he became second to no Prince in Christendom, and to many who practised with him much superior.

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[345] Bath, p. 53.

[346] N. Field and J. Fletcher *The honest man's fortune*, London: Printed for Humphrey Robinson...and for Humphrey Moseley [etc.], 1647, (3.i.257-9).

> His other Exercises were Dancing, Leaping, and in Times of Year fit for it, Learning to Swim; sometimes at Walking fast and far, to accustom and inable himself to make a long March when Time should require it; but most of all at Tennis-Play, wherein, to speak the Truth, which in all Things I especially affect, he neither observed Moderation, nor what apertained to his Dignity and Person, continuing oftimes his Play for the space of three or four Hours, and the same in his Shirt, rather becoming a Plebian than a Prince, who, in Things of that Nature, might only affect Comeliness, or rather a Kind of Carelessness in Shew, to make such activities seem rather natural, than a laborious and toiling Industry.[347]

Implications for the "Henry V" Story

Despite the exuberant exploits of Henry's youth (as reported in *Henry IV* (1 and 2), and despite the Dauphin's attempts to associate the new King with sport (through the tennis-ball gift), I have argued in earlier chapters of this thesis that Henry is largely successful in shaking off the negative associations of sport which might call into question his actions -he successfully proves himself a man and at the same time proves himself an effective ruler (rather than remaining a 'boy') by transforming sport into war. He also distances himself from too close an association with Falstaff and thus from too close an identification with the excessive sports the old man represents. Henry, then, as king, generally appears as a figure not readily to be associated with anything we might label excessive sport.[348]

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[347] Sir Charles Cornwallis, *The Life and Character of Henry-Frederic Prince of Wales*, London: Printed for J. Roberts, 1738) p. 13-14.

[348] There is, of course, that one notable exception --as argued previously -- where sport can be read as signalling that Henry's warfare is, in its entirety, merely a game of chance, and that the king's success might, thus, owe more to fortune than is generally recognized. In this argument, which bases itself in part of the *contemptu mundi* tradition, all earthly

The same, however, can not be said of the French. The Dauphin sends the tennis-balls and never entirely escapes the stigma they represent; the 'mock' that the Dauphin has earlier sent Henry returns with force, something seen even as the French realize their loss at Agincourt: "*Mort de ma vie*, all is confounded all!/ Reproach and everlasting shame/Sits mocking in our plumes"(4.5.3-5). Thus sport is present here as we hear that the French soldiers are running from the field (4.5.6). And the earlier sporting frivolity of the French camp is also mockingly re-emphasised: "Be these the wretches that we played at dice for?"(4.5.9) asks Bourbon in his abject misery. The French have been, it seems, overly fond of games and not appropriately concerned with war. In this reading the Henry V story is providing a salutary lesson to Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences about the dangers of excessive sport and the value of being prepared for war.

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avctivity can be regarded as 'sport'. Taken to the extreme, all action is, then, vain and/or futile. Clearly, this sort of argument exists as some sort of overarching 'umbrella argument' which may be taken up and put down as required. That is, if and when we choose to consider Providence, Fortune, and the *comptempu mundi* tradition we might conclude that Henry (likethe rest of us) is identified with sport. However, if and when we consider Henry independent of the above factors, we can see that he is depicted as having freed himself from negative sporting associations.

Chapter 6: Reading the Folio *Henry V* (1623) -- context from Middleton's *The World Tost at Tennis*

Peace and Sport

Transport yourself back to the year 1623, and imagine sitting down to read the newly published Folio of Shakespeare's dramatic works for the first time. Perhaps you are old enough to have seen some of the plays on the stage a number of years before, or perhaps you are coming to them for the first time. When you get to the play of *Henry V*, what do you make of it? What do you make of the gift of tennis balls you find in Act 1 Scene 2 of the work? It is likely that you are already familiar with the story of King Henry -- but, nevertheless, how does your contemporary (contemporary seventeenth-century, that is) understanding of the sport of court tennis influence your reading of the presentation of this famous gift?

Do you, for example, recall that King James has himself, on a number of occasions, made use of the trope of tennis to speak of the passage of power (sometimes the illegitimate passage of power) from one figure to another?

You might, for instance, remember that James used the trope in a work entitled *A Remonstrance for the Right of Kings, and the Independence of their Crownes...*, published in 1615 and written in response to French arguments over whether kings could ever be rightfully deposed or killed (arguments arising from the assassination of King Henry IV of France in 1610). In this work James disputed the opinion "That Popes may tosse the French King his Throne like a tennis ball, and that killing of Kings is an act meritorious to the purchase of the crowne of Martyrdome".[349] In this case, James suggested that the passage of power -- the tossing of a throne like a tennis ball -- was illegitimate because the Pope had overthrown a legitimate ruler in Henry IV. That is to say, monarchy has been subjugated to religion in this case, and this was anathema to the English king.

James, describing his reasons for writing this work, states that he has not written out of a desire to interfere in the affairs of "a forraigne Commonwealth" or to offer unsolicited counsel, but rather out of affection for King Henry IV, and "also the remembrance of my owne dangers, incurred in the practise of conspiracies flowing from the same source".[350] The statement illustrates James's wariness of religious plots, a wariness made more acute by the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 to which he alludes.

You might also recall that, just as James found that he could describe a religious threat to his sovereignty using the trope of tennis, he similarly found that the trope had its uses in describing challenges to his authority from the sphere of the law. In 1621 -- merely two years prior to the

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[349] Charles Howard McIlwain (ed.), *The Political Works of James I* (New York: The Legal Classics Library, 1994) special edition, p. 170.

[350] McIlwain, p. 169.

publication of Shakespeare's Folio -- James showed that he continued to find the trope of tennis appealing in a political context, when he advised the House of Lords of its judicial responsibilities:

> ...I have told Sir Edward Coke, that he would bring precedents of good King's times...or precedents of my time, and not either of Henry the 6th, a poor weak prince governed by his Council, or of Richard 2nd, who was murdered, and such like princes and times when one house was up today and another tomorrow and the Crown tossed up and down like a tennis ball. I Hope in his vouching precedents to compare my actions to usurpers' or tyrants' times you will punish him....[351]

When you sit down, in 1623, to read Shakespeare's *Henry V*, what does this sporting context highlight for you?

Leaving this question aside for the moment, and moving on from James and his references to tennis, perhaps you recall more clearly Thomas Middleton's masque *The World Tost at Tennis* (which appeared three years earlier) in which the passage of power is, also, said to be analogous to the tossing of a tennis ball. What influence does this work have on your reading of Shakespeare's play?

Clearly (and I now return you to the present), such questions are difficult -- if not impossible -- to answer definitively. Nevertheless, it remains the case that readers of the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare's works did come to their

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[351] W. J. Jones, *Politics and the Bench: The Judges and the Origins of the English Civil War* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 155, quoting from Lady Elizabeth de Villiers, "The Hastings Journal of the Parliament of 1621", in *Camden Miscellany xx*, 1953, pp. 27-29.

readings of its plays with certain understandings and knowledge gained through the experience of living in that particular age.

The World Tost at Tennis: Thomas Middleton and William Rowley *"A Courtly Masque; The Device called, The World tost at Tennis..."*.[352]

In *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, David Bevington and Peter Holbrook write extensively on the subject of pacifism in the Jacobean court, on the foreign policy which accompanied the policies of peace, on James's wish to be regarded as *Rex Pacificus*, and, most importantly for my argument, on the relevance of these issues to the masque.[353] Bevington and Holbrook do not specifically deal with *The World Tost at Tennis*, but they do consider the Jacobean masque, in general, to be "politicized by foreign policy differences". Holbrook, for instance, sees this genre as one in which the arguments of the competing factions of the royal court -- the war and peace parties -- could find public expression.[354] Jacobean masques, according to Holbrook, regularly chose pacifism as a major theme, and were, "outwardly at least, designed to be the aesthetic embodiment of a

[352] I use Bullen's edition of *The World Tost at Tennis*, unless otherwise specified. A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1964) 8 vols, vol.7, pp. 137-194. The work was written to be performed at Court in 1620, and was published "to be sold by [sic] at Christ Church Gate, 1620" and entered into the books of the Stationer' Company on July 4th 1620.

[353] Holbrook, pp. 67-87.

[354] Holbrook, p. 71; p. 71.

pacifist culture".[355] However, as the phrase "outwardly at least" implies, these works were also capable of greater ambiguity, highlighting the opposing views that, on the one hand -- in the tradition of humanistic scepticism of "of the neo-chivalric militaristic culture" -- a desire for peace was laudable, and on the other hand, that peaceful excesses and inaction merely lead to a "decadent, slothful, effeminate and unpatriotic court".[356] According to Malcolm Smuts, such criticism was widespread in James's reign: "After 1604 the long Jacobean peace became widely associated with growing luxury and vice".[357]

The "idleness" of peace -- and of the sport which was seen as a natural accompaniment of it -- was railed against by proponents of war in the Renaissance. The message was a common one in the early seventeenth century, repeated in the address which begins Dekker's *Worke for Armorours: or The Peace is Broken* (1609).[358] In this work the idleness of peace is asserted: "...in this present yeare of 1609 drummes will be strucke up, and cullors spread, under which you may all fight, and all have good pay: Forsake therfore the townes where you lye ingarison'd (during this Abstinence from warre) leave your drinking there, sithence here you may be in action, and drinke healths in bloud".[359]

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[355] Holbrook, p. 73.

[356] Holbrook, p. 71.

[357] Smuts, p. 37.

[358] Thomas Dekker, *Worke for Armorours*, pp. 85-166 in Alexander B. Grosart (ed.), *The Non-Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker* 5 vols (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), vol. 4, p. 91.

[359] Dekker, *Worke for Armorours*, pp. 92-93.

In some respects peace was naturally defined in relation to its opposite -- the activity of war. Renaissance authors, such as Castiglione, write that those who over-indulge in the pursuits of Peace, "precise fashions...merry talke...[and]...matters belonging to entertainment of women and love...doe many times nothing els but womanish the mindes, corrupt youth, and bring them to a most wanton trade of living: whereupon afterwarde ensue these effects, that...few there bee that have the courage, I will not say to jeopard their life, but to enter into a daunger".[360]

Indeed, critics saw in the masque genre itself evidence of just such depravity; for whilst the masque served a serious political purpose, it is nevertheless the case that its vast expense led to widespread perceptions of the genre as "at best a frivolous 'trifle' or 'vanity'"[361] -- even Shakespeare's Prospero refers to his masque as a "vanity" of art (IV.i.41). Masques, expensive and time consuming to produce, could well be described as "ornaments and delights of peace" as Samuel Daniel writes, in a letter to Lucy, Countess of Bedford. [362]

The royal court's preoccupation with the "vanities" of the masque was, particularly in the reign of James 1, compared unfavourably with the court's own irenic policies; again, to quote Holbrook, "...the Jacobean masque was...compromised by its role in symbolizing the disgraceful frivolity and lack of militancy of the Stuart court...".[363]

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[360] Baldassare Castiglione (1528), Sir Thomas Hoby (trans. and ed.), *The Book of the Courtier* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1974), first published in Everyman's Library 1928, pp. 260-61.
[361] William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, in Peter Alexander (ed.), *William Shakespeare the Complete Works* (London: Collins, 1985), first pub. 1951. All subsequent references to the works of Shakespeare are taken from this souce, unless otherwise stated.

[362] Holbrook, p. 71.

[363] Holbrook, p. 72.

The court came to be considered effeminate and decadent and the masque played a role in this, becoming itself emblematic of peaceful excess. Stephen Orgel explains that James's court was split along the lines of those who believed that a "chivalric revival" was called for -- "militaristic and aggressively Protestant" and hearkening fondly back the the chivalry of the Middle Ages (supporters of this position included James's son Henry) and those, including James himself who embraced Peace.[364] However, as we have seen, "Peace" to some meant idleness, luxury and excess. And, furthermore, by working for peace with Spain, James left himself open to claims of treachery, for, "To militant Protestants, friendship with [Catholic] Spain meant an attack on true religion and was thus tantamount to appeasement of the enemy".[365] Moreover, according to Holbrook, the schisms in court attitudes found their way into the politics of the masque, with the result that the merit of such court-sponsored pacifism becomes a major theme of many Jacobean and Caroline masques. For example both Samuel Daniel's *The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* (1604) and Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Queens* (1609) have this theme at their centres.

The issue of peace was central to James's reign. The titlepage of James's collected works, published in 1616, displays two figures -- Religion and Peace, figures which might be said to represent "the sustaining principles of James's policies". The figure of Religion emphasizes his divine claim to the throne, whereas that of Peace is depicted "trampling on the arms of war"

[364] Stephen Orgel, "Making Greatness Familiar", in Stephen Greenblatt (ed.), *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Norman, Oklahoma: Pilgrim Books, 1982), pp.41-48, p. 42; p. 42; p.42.

[365] Holbrook, p. 69.

and carrying a cornucopia "showing that peace brings abundance".[366] Other literary works, works like *The Peace Maker, or Great Brittaines Blessing* (1618), likewise praised the benefits of James's peace.[367]

Moreover, James had made it clear early in his reign that he considered peace the "greatest blessing a monarch could bestow upon his subjects".[368] Support for the king's vision of a peaceful, and united, realm was widespread: "James's commitment to peace, implicit in his motto *Beati Pacifici* (blessed are the peacemakers) was untiringly repeated by artists of every sort, for it was clearly part of a providential plan. The consequence was that the figure of Peace became the most predictable and over-employed goddess in the Jacobean pantheon".[369] Support for Peace was evidently based upon the view that the potential benefits of this were enormous: Graham Parry, in *The Golden Age Restor'd*, writes that it was hoped that James, by bringing Britain together under one rule, would create "a renewed Roman Empire rising in the West. In accordance with the prophecies in Virgil, the renewed empire would bring in, like that of Augustus, a time of peace, and would usher in a new golden age".[370]

The issues of peace, foreign policy, and prerogative, are in the years around 1620 evidently intermingled and important ones. By 1621, there is no doubt that the war party in the English court -- those who argued for military

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[366] Parry, p. 29; p. 29; p. 29.

[367] Bromham, p. 312.

[368] Holbrook, p. 68.

[369] Parry, pp. 17-18.

[370] Parry, p. 16.

intervention in Europe -- had become the anti-Spanish party, the general argument being that "war is necessary if religion and national and family honor are to be upheld".[371] Throughout his reign the king had repeatedly defended the royal prerogative from challenges from parliament and law, and the issue continued to create tensions well into the 1620s, as is borne out by the king's actions in dissolving parliament on the sixth of January, 1622. The reasons behind this action had much to do with challenges to the king's prerogative and with the king's pacifist stance in foreign policy. Critics of the king's peace, including the authors of popular pamphets of the time, suggested "that the pursuit of peace springs from a desire for false security, which leads to inaction and the wish to avoid responsibilities".[372]

The King's desire for a lasting English peace was an understandable one. Indeed, after the turmoil of the latter part of Elizabeth's reign -- a period which included the threat of Spanish invasion, an extended and expensive campaign to quell Irish uprising, and uncertainty over the issue of a peaceful succession -- many hoped that the Jacobean period would emerge as a "golden age" of peace and prosperity.

Significantly, the nature of such a "golden age" is described by Thomas Middleton in his panegyric to the King, *The Peace-Maker; Or, Great Brittaines Blessing* (1618), as a time of profitable labour.[373] The work lauds James as the British Solomon, whose rule brings the blessings of both peace and

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[371] Bromham, p. 311.

[372] Bromham, p. 311.

[373] Thomas Middleton, *The Peace-Maker; Or, Great Brittaines Blessing* (1618), in A. H. Bullen (ed.), *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (New York: AMS Press, 1964), 8 vols, vol. 8, pp. 319-46.

profit. Peace leads to profitable labour, both through trade -- "The trading merchant finds it [peace], who daily ploughs the sea, and as daily reaps the harvest of his labours" -- and at home: "The fearless trades and handicraft men sing away their labours all day (having no note drowned with either noise of drum or cannon) and sleep with peace at night...[And]...The frolic countryman opens the fruitful earth, and crops his plenty from her fertile bosom...". The work's ethos becomes increasingly apparent as this legitimate labour is contrasted with the illegitimate labour of warfare, in the process demonstrating the strength of officially sanctioned anti-war feeling: "Were blows more bountiful to thee? Did blood yield thee benefit? War afford thee wealth? Didst thou make that thine own by violence, which was another's by right?"[374]

A similar message is found in *The Peace Maker* where we find the war party disparaged as a party of blood and destruction, a party lusting over false honour, trying to achieve it through false labour:

> Behold then, not without a face of horror, the miserable condition the Sons of this age run into. All they venture for is to bring the bloodiness of their action into the compass of honor (as if honor consisted in destruction). Now what impossibility follows that labor, even the weakest may conjecture...where there is no Peace, all other benefits have a cessation.[375]

And, indeed, the message itself was a long running one, and one with which the English Renaissance courtier would have been all too familiar.

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[374] Middleton, *The Peace-Maker*, p. 328, pp. 328-29, p. 328.

[375] Middleton, *The Peace-Maker*, p. 341.

The court poet-soldier Thomas Churchyard had certainly covered the same material almost five decades before in his Entertainment performed for Elizabeth and her court at Bristol in 1574. In the *Entertainment at Bristol* Churchyard writes that war is not to be encouraged:

> ... you se what quarels aer,
> And how that warres bryngs wo and waest, and leaves a kyngdom baer. The people spoyld, the howsis bornt, the frends and neighbour slayn;
> The giltles plaegd, and eatch man wrongd, whear rage and warre doth rayn.[376]

War brings destruction and disorder. The description highlights the actual effects of warfare. The ugly process is to be discouraged.

In the following argument I will show that the lessons learnt from this generalized discussion of Jacobean politics and also of the masque genre can be gainfully applied to the masque *The World Tost at Tennis*. This work is most interesting for the manner in which it relates the issue of peace (as discussed above) with another important Jacobean concern - "sport". Notably, it is arguable that the lessons learnt from this particular masque might be applied when considering the drama of the public theatres, as this masque, *The World Tost at Tennis*, has in fact been recognized as being closer in style to the plays than other masques: "*The World Tost* is a peculiar hybrid; it has more masque elements than usual with a play and more poetry than usual with a masque; but it is filled with the allegory characteristic of masques and pageants".[377] Moreover, it is also the case that

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[376] Nichols, vol. 1, p. 404.

[377] Norman A. Brittin, *Thomas Middleton*, pp.108-09.

whilst the *The World Tost at Tennis* was written to be presented before James I in 1620, and originally "intended for a royal night" (*Prol.*, line 12), the work became successful public drama in its own right; for, as Gary Taylor's entry in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* explains, whilst Middleton "...and Rowley co-wrote *The World Tost at Tennis* for Prince Charles's Men to perform at Denmark House for Prince Charles .... it transferred to the Swan, for the first time successfully bringing 'A Courtly Masque' into commercial playhouses for popular audiences". [378]

In writing on *The World Tost at Tennis* it is tempting to consider it solely "Middleton's" work, for we know so much about him and so little about the co-author William Rowley: "Nothing ...[in fact]...is known of William Rowley's early life although his dates are *c.* 1585-*c.* 1625. Information about him is derived from his stage-connections. He was a well known actor with Prince Charles' men from 1609-*c.*1612, specializing in playing comedy roles - clowns, and comic villains - and in 1623 he was a prominent member of the King's Company...".[379] Adding to this somewhat unsatifactory biography we do at least know that Rowley and Middleton were frequent collaborators: "William Rowley's name appears below Thomas Middleton's on the title-pages of the earliest known editions of four plays and a masque: *A Fair Quarrel, The Changeling, The Old Law, The Spanish Gipsy,* and *The World Tost at Tennis*".[380] David J. Lake, considers which parts of *The World Tost at Tennis* might be attributed to Middleton and which to

[378] Gary Taylor, 'Middleton, Thomas (*bap.* 1580, *d.* 1627)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, electronic edition.

[379] Patricia Thompson, *The Changeling*, p. viii.

[380] David M. Holmes, *The Art of Thoms Middleton: A Critical Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 207.

Rowley.[381] Such avenues of inquiry are outside the scope of this present work.

Critics such as Anthony Bromham have pointed out that Thomas Middleton displayed a keen interest in politics in much of his drama, from *The Phoenix* (1604), which deals with the art of princely government, to the political satire of *The Game at Chess* (1624),[382] and a concern with contemporary politics appears to lie at the centre of *The World Tost at Tennis* also.

It has also been argued that Middleton's play *Women Beware Women*, performed in 1621, only a year later than *The World Tost at Tennis*, "makes a contribution to the contemporary debate about James I's peaceful foreign policy which was intense in the early 1620's".[383] This policy – a policy aimed at appeasing Catholic Spain and thus ensuring peace -- saw the king steadfastly refusing to send military assistance to Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine (the Spanish had invaded the palatinate in 1620) and, also, at the same time continuing to negotiate for the marriage of Prince Charles to the Spanish Infanta.

To many, the king's inaction on the one front and action on the other, despite being grounded in his credo of Peace, was seen as a failure to adequately defend European Protestantism from the Catholic threat.

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[381] David J. Lake, *The Canon of Thomas Middleton's Plays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

[382] A. A. Bromham, "The Tragedy of Peace: Political Meaning in *Women Beware Women*", pp. 309-29, in *SEL*, Spring 1986, p. 309.

[383] Bromham, p. 310.

Certainly, "anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic feeling in the country was deeprooted, and had been fuelled in 1619 by the execution of Raleigh at the instigation of the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, who, it seemed, was acquiring more and more influence over the king".[384] Many regarded this threat as an ever increasing one -- and one which the king was not responding to in an appropriate manner -- some would have preferred aggression over appeasement. James's pacifist policies, together with the religious implications of such, divided the court like no other issue.[385]

The question might be asked whether drama, including *The World Tost at Tennis*, reflected the politics of the period? Certainly, Middleton's later work *A Game at Chess* (1624) involved itself in contemporary politics by explicitly satirizing the Spanish ambassador Gondomar, and one can only speculate as to whether Gondamar is similarly represtented in the figure of "Deceit" in *The World Tost at Tennis* -- for just as deceit encourages the devil to wrest control of the world in this work, it is possible that many would have seen Gondomar's efforts for his Catholic master as similarly pernicious.

Whilst the above is uncertain, it is likely that auditors hostile to James's policies of peace and appeasement would have recognized in *The World Tost at Tennis* an unflattering representation of a Court obsessed with idle "sport" to the detriment of what many would have regarded as the only "legitimate labour" of the aristocracy -- that is, warfare. War, according to

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[384] Bromham, p. 310.

[385] Peter Holbrook, "Jacobean Masques and the Jacobean Peace", pp. 67-87, in David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (eds.), *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 69.

the critic Maurice Hunt, as the legitimate "work" of the aristocracy is a concept familiar from Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* and *Antony and Cleopatra*.[386] However, it is important to recognize at this point that in the Renaissance "warfare" was the primary occupation, arguably the only "legitimate labour", of the aristocracy -- in times of war they must "work" as warriors. "Peace", then, was seen as a state in which the aristocracy had no employment. The problem with aristocratic idleness, which came to be identified with over-indulgence in sport, was not that this was, in itself, a concern, but rather that the excesses of a sport-filled Peace might lead to a subsequent inability to wage war. The fear was that Peace, and its attendant sport, had the capacity to make the nation's aristocracy unfit for war. These concerns were long running; as early as 1600, complaints were raised as to the ill affects of peace,[387] and similar arguments could also be found in 1614, when Fulke Greville, for instance, expresses the concern that the "active, vigorous, enriching and balancing" warfare of the mid-Elizabethan period had been replaced with "an idle, I fear deceiving, shadow of peace".[388] The question of whether or not England was ready to defend itself troubled Englishmen throughout the later part of Elizabeth's reign: there was concern after the Armada that complaisance had led to weakened defences, that the undue euphoria had led to military training slackening off.[389]

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[386] Hunt, p. 45, p. 39.

[387] Hunt, p. 51.

[388] quoted in Hunt, p. 51.

[389] John Morrill (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 48.

This relative complaisancy extended into James's reign also. From the signing of the Treaty of London in 1604, England experienced "an eight-year period of relative peace with Spain", a period throughout which many bemoaned the "decay of England's warrior class and the general idleness and sloth of countrymen hardened in previous decades by constant training for war".[390]

In the context of the above argument, Middleton and Rowley's masque consists of a number of frames worthy of discussion. The front matter of the work -- which includes the title page, a dedication, an address to the reader, and a prologue -- contains a number of brief but significant references to the sport of tennis.[391] Beginning with the title page, where the work is described as *A Courtly Masque; The Device called, The World tost at Tennis,* it becomes evident that tennis -- through its uses as the "device" or central conceit of the masque -- will be of crucial importance.[392]

In Middleton and Rowley's masque, we find that "tennis" is clearly positioned as an important signifier in the work. Early in the masque, in the *Address to the Reader,* the "device" enables and occasions some wordplay where it is stated: "...this short and small treatise that follows called *a Masque, the device further intituled The World tost at Tennis* -- how it will be now tossed in the world, I know not...". As a result of this word-play, it might be argued, the work itself becomes a figurative tennis ball, to be recognized as subject to the vagaries of the court audience's critical

[390] Hunt, p. 50-51.

[391] Bullen, p. 139.

[392] Bullen, p. 139.

energies. In the next frame, an induction to the court performance, the audience's attention is directed squarely at tennis.

As the induction begins, some creative anthropomorphism occurs, with the three royal palaces Richmond, St James, and Denmark House presented as allegorical figures. The attractions of the various palaces are discussed, with Denmark House considering St James best for spring sports; then St James addresses Richmond as follows: "Thou never sawest my new gallery and my tennis-court, Richmond" (ll. 13, 4). Richmond's reply is: "No, but I heard of it, and from whence it came too" (l. 15). This enigmatic reply results in some further dialogue:

> *St. Jam.* Why, from whence came it?
>
> *Rich.* Nay, lawfully derived, from the brick-kilns, as thou didst thyself.
>
> *St. Jam.* Thou breedest crickets, I think, and that
> will serve for the anagram to a critic. (ll.16-20)

It is curious that the critical powers of the audience -- the interpretive energies of the royal court in the case of masque -- should be invoked here, in relation to tennis. Given the references to "bricks" and "spring sports" in the passage, and a later conjunction of "bricks" and "fornication" which appears in the body of the masque -- " 'Tis the beginning of Amsterdam: they say the first brick there was laid with fresh cheese and cream, because mortar made of lime and hair was wicked and committed fornication" (l.542 8) -- it becomes apparent that the exchange relates to an association between tennis and sexual behaviour.

Some support for this might be found in Randle Cotgrave's French/ English dictionary of 1611. In this work the term "Bricoller" -- which in English translates as the Tennis shot "a brick-wall" -- is also defined as "to leacher".[393] Furthermore, a number of other authors of this period make bawdy puns involving this sport, with the tennis metaphor used in a number of works to figure a threat to female virginity: "And by my troth my sisters maiden head Stands like a game of tennis, is the ball Hit into the hole or hazard, Farewell all".[394] And it is even the case that merely naming elements of the tennis court itself could potentially invoke bawdy thoughts -- the entry for the term *Pelouse* in Randle Cotgrave's dictionary, for example, firstly defines the term as the lower hazard in a tennis court but mentions that this term also refers to "a woman's privities". This is an age in which the name of a hole in the wall of a tennis court can also stand as slang for a vagina. In such an age, I would argue, we should understand that seemingly far-fetched correspondences were a commonplace.

It is notable that, despite the Induction's emphasis on sport and delight, the masque proper begins not with sport, but with a dialogue between a soldier and a scholar. Middleton's soldier has evidently returned from war without bounty, and now finds himself unemployed and undervalued: he declares, "...I was bold to show myself to some of my old and familiar acquaintance, but being disguised with my wants, there's nobody knew me" (ll.8-10). There is an obvious contrast between royal leisure and plenty (found in the early frames of the masque) and the want and poverty of the soldier (and subsequently the scholar) in the masque itself; the soldier has no place in

[393] Cotgrave, unpaginated.

[394] H. Porter, *The Pleasant History Of the two angry women of Abington*, (London: William Ferbrand, 1599), l. 829.

peace, which is more a time for sport and luxury. The soldier proceeds to inform us that Britain in peace does not value its "arms":

> ...when there's use for me
> I shall be brave again, hugg'd and belov'd:
> We are like winter-garments, in the height
> And [the] hot blood of summer, put off, thrown by
> For moth's meat, never so much as thought on;
> Till the drum strikes up storms again. (ll. 43-8)

The masque, at this point, expresses some criticism of James's Britain for undervaluing its "Arms" and "Arts";[395] the soldier who compares himself with a "winter garment" obviously has no place in peacetime Britain which, as we have seen in the induction, most values "spring" sports (including tennis).

The implication of this is that a royal court which indulges too much in the sports of peace must necessarily be imprudently neglectful of its "Arts" and "Arms".[396]

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[395] Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia or Moral Emblems*, unpaginated.

[396] Middleton considers this issue in the earlier *Father Hubburd's Tales* also. We saw that the ant's role, in Middleton's beast fable, has been to describe the trials of the lives of poor labourers. However, as the work progresses, the ant changes his occupation: "...I, covetous of more change, leapt out of this little skin of an ant, and hung my skin on the hedge, taking upon me the grisly shape of a dusty soldier" (Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 89). As the ant, again, begins to describe his mistreatment - this time as a soldier - it becomes apparent that his broader purpose in the work is to provide a catalogue of the abuses suffered by members of a number of society's estates:

> To conclude, they used me very courteously and gentlemanlike awhile; like an old cunning bowler to fetch in a young ketling gamester, who will suffer him to win one sixpenny-game at the first, and then lurch him in six pounds afterward: and so they played with me, still training me, with their fair promises into far deeper and deadlier battles, where, like villainous cheating bowlers, they lurched me of two of my best limbs, viz. my right arm and right leg, that so, of a man of war, I became in show a monster of war; yet comforted in this, because I knew

The miserable state in which the "unemployed" soldier typically found himself in peaceful Elizabethan and Jacobean England is recounted in the works of Thomas Dekker. Dekker provides us with an account which, in its description of the returned soldier, clearly demonstrates the tensions between wartime and peacetime activities:

> I called to minde the infortunate condition of Soldiers, and old seruitors, who when the stormes of troubles are blown over, being curbd of meanes and so burying that courage and worth that is in their bosoms, are compeld (by the vilenesse of the time) to follow [at the] heeles of *Asses* with gay trappings, not daring so much as once to open their lips in reprehension of those apish beastly and ridiculous vices, upon whose monstrous backes they are carried up and downe the world: and they are flattered onely for their greatnes, whilst those of merit live in a slauish subjection under them.[397]

In 1602 the anonymous author of *Liberalitie and Prodigalitie*[398] rehearses similar themes. In this play a lack of vertue manifests itself in hedonistic prodigality, liberality and wastefulness is allowed by a lack of self government. The price of such prodigality (and attendant liberality) is paid for by, amongst others, the poor soldier who has served his State yet finds himself unsupported and unrewarded for his sacrifice.

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war begot many such monsters as myself in less than a twelvemonth (Middleton, *Father Hubburd's Tales*, p. 93-94).

[397] Dekker, *Worke for Armorours*, p. 99-100.

[398] Anonymous. *Liberalitie and Prodigalitie* (1602), Printed by Simon Stafford, for George Vincent [etc.] 1602.

And, similarly, Thomas Scot in his "Satyra Aulica" expressly compares the pampered courtier with the undervalued soldier:

> ...To be a souldier is to be a slave, Danger abroad, reproach at home to have. Deepe furrow'd wounds fresh bleeding in the wars Findes less reliefe and pittie then the scars Of muskey courtiers, when their smooth slicke skin, Is bramble-scratched with a Ladies pinne. Nor do they now, (as er'st they did delight)...[to fight, to tilt, to turnay]...their soulderie is swaggering in the court, where none may strike the vrger but in sport: To offer strangers, strange and foul disgraces, Presuming on their privledged places...their idle houres...they spend at shoove-boord, or at penny pricke, At dice, cards, tennis.... [399]

And in yet another work from the first decade of the seventeenth century we hear what happens when a martial society forgets its martial roots:

> The Cittie made a brothell house of sinne
> ...valour turn'd to luxurie.
> The field of Mars turn'd to a Tennis-court...[400]

The direct contrast between the battlefield and the tennis court as emblems of two means of behaviour (war and peace) could not be clearer than in this work.

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[399] Thomas Scot, "Satyra Aulica", in *Philomythie*, London: Printed for Francis Constable [etc.], 1622, ll. 12-40.

[400] Anonymous, *The Tragedie of Claudius Tiberius Nero* (1607), Printed for Francis Burton [etc.], 1607.

There is a hint of the charge of effeminacy in the above catalogue of criticism, with "smooth slicke skinned" courtiers compared unfavourably with soldiers. Indeed, the passage argues that courtiers prefer idle and vaine pursuits such as tennis to martial exercises. We can see such issues highlighted in the soldier's complaints, and read them as implied in the references to sport (particularly tennis) in Middleton and Rowley's masque.

The passage of sovereign power: sovereignty and tennis

In *The World Tost at Tennis* the sovereignty of the world passes from a rustic figure, "Simplicity", to a king, and to representatives of the military, the church, and the law, before finally returning to the "rightful" hands of the king. As this action unfolds, a model of the globe is actually "tossed" from figure to figure -- as if merely a tennis-ball. I would argue that the emblematic nature of the reference to the device of 'tennis' is emphasized by the fact that the stage action apparently (as can be inferred from the illustrated title page of the work) included the passage from figure to figure of a large terrestrial globe -- this globe conflated in the work's title and device with a tennis ball. [401]

To a modern audience there may seem an incongruity here -- the masque speaks of the world being tossed at tennis, yet a literal tennis ball, or even a game of tennis, is not represented in the body of the work. I would argue that this merely strengthens the case for an audience being expected to

[401] Title page reproduced in W. J. Lawrence *Those Nut Cracking Elizabethans: Studies of the Early Theatre and Drama* (London: The Argonaut, 1935), Plate 5, facing p. 143.

interpret the title (the conceit, the device) emblematically. That is, if the masque is called the *World Tost at Tennis*, yet tennis is underrepresented, then the title can only make sense if interpreted emblematically -- especially since the title is also the 'device' of the work.

The device in Renaissance literature, it has been argued, "remained the keystone of the dramatist's craft" [402] and may -- as the OED informs us -- best be thought of as "an emblematic figure or design, *esp.* one borne by a particular person etc. as a heraldic bearing, etc.: usually accompanied by a 'motto'". The authors of the work must have been confident that their audience could bring some prior knowledge -- some literary context -- to an interpretation, otherwise the title, which is a device or conceit -- by definition meant to be interpreted -- would have fallen very flat indeed.

Perhaps, as one theorist has recently suggested, we as modern readers have lost the ability to understand the signification or meaning of certain images, to the point where, for us, some images "...have ceased to *convey* meaning at all...The images do no useful work, but remain dead statements of parallels merely said to obtain, for no reason". This is, the theorist writes, an "unusual" state to find oneself in -- and I agree. [403] How, for instance, can we accept that the authors Middleton and Rowlely would introduce the imagery of tennis into their masque *The World Tost at Tennis*, and then abandon it immediately as if it were to have no purpose? This would be strange enough if the imagery were merely to be found in the work itself, but more so since the very title, the conceit, and the dramatic action (of

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[402] Glynne Wickham. *Early English Stages 1300 to 1600 vol. 3, Plays and their Makers to 1576.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, p. 67; p. 68.

[403] Rosemond Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery: Some Mediaeval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 306; p. 306.

tossing a globe) continues to emphasise it throughout. Surely, in this case, one cannot consider the title of the work to be doing no useful work?

It seems to me much more likely that we as modern readers are simply unaware of the meaning(s) of the imagery. The conclusion we might reach is that dilemmas such as the one we are facing (is the tennis imagery useful or not?) simply prove the point that "allegorical imagery is obstinately difficult to translate into visual terms unless we ourselves know enough to provide the literary key. For an allegory to be visually apprehensible one must hold the key to deciphering it. This key can only come from the knowledge that a tradition exists (the tradition can be either literary, visual or both). Whether we are reading the symbols, studying the iconography, or interpreting the imagery (text or picture), our mode is always "the uncovering or revealing of meaning through similitude". [404] Sometimes the similitude comes from the tradition, from a similar usage elsewhere, rather than from any contingent similarity we could otherwise see; that is, we can easily miss the point if we are unaware of the tradition.

It is possible that the idea for this "device", that is the idea of "tossing the world at tennis" in the words of the masque's title, had an antecedent (or at least a parallel) in Cicero's *On the Commonwealth* (*De re publica*). In this work, the passage of power from one estate to another is, as in *The World Tost at Tennis,* compared to tossing a ball. Cicero writes: "Thus the power is like the ball, which is flung from hand to hand: it passes from kings to tyrants to the aristocracy, from them to democracy, and from these back again...".[405] Cicero uses the metaphor in the context of a discussion of the

[404] Tuve, pp. 321-22; p. 322; p. 411; p. 411

[405] C. D. Yonge (trans. and ed.), *The Treatises of M. T. Cicero* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1878), p. 317. It is unclear whether Renaissance authors would have had access to *On the*

merits of various forms of rule -- monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy -- and argues: "royalty is, in my opinion, very far preferable to the...other kinds of political constitutions".[406] Thus, Cicero sets forth for us a convenient conceptual parallel to *The World Tost at Tennis*. He has power passing from one figure to another as if it were merely a ball; Middleton and Rowley literally *show* the same thing with their figures (King, military men, religious and common men) tossing the globe (tossing power over the world) between them. And, presumably to add weight and/or interest to this concept, they, like Cicero, decide to label power as a ball. Finally, they are in no way subtle about this, with the ball and game becoming the device and title of the work.

The conceptual parallel between Cicero's work and that from Middleton and Rowley is both suggestive and intriguing. However, for those who would prefer a parallel taken from Renaissance literature, a similar identification of ball and earthly globe can also be found in the work of Rabelais. Rabelais closes *Gargantua* with an allegory for the game of tennis, in which "The globe terrestrial is the tennis-ball (*la pelote*)".[407] And for those who would like to see an English dramatic analogue, a related juxtaposition of Earth and ball is found also in *Lust's Dominion* (1600):

> Me thinks this stage shews like a Tennis Court
> ...

Commonwealth in its entirety: "Although *On the Commonwealth* seems to have been a canonical text in antiquity and was widely known until the fifth CE, it cannot be shown to have existed entire after that, and it survives only in fragmentary form". M. T. Cicero, *On the Commonwealth and On the Laws* James E. G. Zetzel (ed). (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. xiv.

[406] Yonge, p. 317.

[407] Bath, p. 46. Bath quotes from Sir Thomas Urquart's seventeenth-century translation of Rabelais's *Gargantua* (1534)

How smoothly could I bandy every ball,
Over this Globe of earth, win sett and all. (V.v. 66-74)[408]

Arguably, then, Middleton and Rowley are reflecting a familiar -- and long-running -- iconographic identification between the spherical tennis-ball and the sphere of Earth. And, in fact, as Randle Cotgrave's dictionary suggests, the conflation of the globe with a ball was to be found in the very definition of a globe itself: "Globe: m. A Globe, a round bowle, a ball."[409] Arguably, then, where the Earth can be represented as a ball, it follows that the passage of power -- or changes of sovereignty -- can similarly be represented by the passage (or tossing) of a ball.

Sport and Sovereignty

In *The World Tost at Tennis,* it is initially the figure "Simplicity" who happens upon the globe (or ball) of the world, signifying its early innocence. His ownership of the earth -- and remember that he physically owns the globe on stage (refusing to give it into the hands of Deceit) -- represents a benign sovereignty, as he merely observes his "subjects" without making demands of them. They remain free to sing, dance, pipe, and play; and, pointedly (unlike the soldier or the courtly audience of the masque, respectively), Simplicity's subjects "neither beg nor come at court"

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[408] Anonymous, *Lusts Dominion,* London: Printed for F. K. and are to be sold by Robert Pollard [etc.], 1657. Larry S. Champion considers the case for Dekker's part in the authorship of *Lust's Dominion.* (Larry. S. Champion, *Thomas Dekker and the Traditions of English Drama* (New York: Peter Lang, 1985), pp. 149-150). The evidence is inconclusive. (Larry. S. Champion, *Thomas Dekker and the Traditions of English Drama,* p. 150.)

[409] Cotgrave, unpaginated.

(l. 494). Just as the induction shows a court preoccupied with sport, so too Simplicity's world is one filled with sport.

However, if Simplicity's rule is a sportful, and by definition a simple one, things soon become more complicated. We are next shown Deceit encouraging the ambitions of a king:

> Sir, he's a fool, the world belongs to you;
> You're mighty in your worth and your command,
> You know to govern, form, make laws, and take
> Their sweet and precious penalty; it befits
> A mightiness like yours: the world was made
> For such a lord as you, so absolute
> A majesty in all princey nobleness,
> As yourself is: but to lie useless now,
> Rusty or lazy, in a fool's pre-eminence,
> It is not for a glorious worth to suffer. (ll. 498-507)

Deceit's reasoning emphasizes the king's mightiness, nobility, and ability to govern and make laws, and then compares all this with Simplicity's inability to make sufficiently good (or glorious) use of his charge. What is particularly interesting at this point, I would argue, is not that the king accepts Deceit's reasoning, but that it is not the above reasoning which ultimately convinces Simplicity to relinquish the world; rather, it is the king's bedazzling appearance which has most effect. Simplicity declares:

> Here's a brave glistening thing looks me I'the face,
> I know not what to say to't. (ll. 508-9)

Such a response, similar to Caliban's reaction to the drunken butler Stephano in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*,[410] does not engender confidence in either the king's abilities or in Simplicity's ability to recognize an able king.

With the world in the king's possession, Deceit is again repulsed, after which Simplicity asks that the king:

> ...remember now
> You had the world from me as clean as a pick,
> ...
> No great corruption nor oppression in't,
> No knavery, tricks, nor cozenage. (ll. 525-28)

And the king agrees: "Thou say'st true, fool; the world has a clear water" (l. 530). This exchange, together with the earlier song emphasizing song, dance and play under Simplicity's rule, demonstrates that the world under Simplicity was relatively unstained -- and, as mentioned above, free from excessive demands of sovereignty.

In contrast, consider now the king's observations on the state of the world:

> How pleasantly the countries lie about,
> of which we are sole lord! What's that I' the middle?
> *Sim.* Looks like a point, you mean, a very prick?
> *King.* Ay, that, that.
> *Sim.* 'Tis the beginning of Amsterdam... (ll. 542-5)

The king's response emphasizes sovereignty. Whereas Simplicity had viewed the world as a spectator, the king thinks of it and its countries as

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[410] Caliban, upon encountering the drunken Stephano and his companion Trinculo, similarly misjudges the "greatness" of his newfound acquaintances: "These be fine things, an if they be not sprites./ That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor./ I will kneel to him" (2.2.8-10).

"his" -- he is "sole lord". Furthermore, Simplicity's description of the city as "a point" or "a very prick" -- whilst potentially bawdy -- also serves to emphasize that the brand of sovereignty valued by the king is meaningless -- in mathematics a prick or point is defined as having no area. An extract from a dialogue between Philosophy and Boethius, found in *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, illustrates the point:

> If in this so small a point of title we be hedged in & inclosed, what think we...so much of enlarging fame, & name promoting? For what large and magnifick thing hath glory bounde in so straight & small lymites?...Dost thou not see then, how narrow & neere presst glory is...[411]

Thus the value of "earthly" sovereignty itself is brought into question. Is the desire for sovereignty itself just a 'sport'? Moreover, such expression of the trivial nature of earthly concerns, including politics, could be thought of as merely echoing or extending the same idea which has previously been implied through the imagery of the world as tennis-ball; here too the world is trivialized.

Also trivialized by the imagery is the desire for worldly possession or control -- after all the world is effectively 'nothing' -- a prick -- or at best as good a toy as a ball. Thus when next, we see Deceit advising a soldier (a land-captain) to take control of the world we might see that the value of his advice is to be questioned (and he is, after all, deceitful):

> Captain, 'tis you that have the bloody sweats,
> You venture life and limbs; 'tis you that taste
> The stings of thirst and hunger.
> ...
> Yet lets another carry away the world,

[411] Boethius, *Five Bookes of Philosophicall Comfort* [Consolation of Philosophy] Newly translated [by I.T.] London, 1609, p. 38.

> Of which by right you are the only master;
> Stand curtsying for your pay at your return –
> Perhaps with wooden legs – to every groom,
> That dares not look full right upon a sword,
> Nor upon any wound or slit of honour. (ll. 551-61)

The soldier agrees:

> No more; I'll be myself: I that uphold
> Countries and kingdoms, must I halt downright,
> And be propt up with part of mine own strength,
> The least part too? why, have not I the power
> To make myself stand absolute of myself,
> That keep up others? (ll. 562-67)

Deceit's counsel emphasizes that the king's authority rests upon the strength of, and the trials undertaken by, his army. This is immediately demonstrated when at the soldier's threatening entreaty the king quickly yields the world, saying:

> Stay, man of merit, it belongs to thee,
> [*Gives the orb* to Land-Captain.]
> I cheerfully resign it; all my ambition
> Is but the quiet calm of peaceful days,
> And that fair good I know thy arm will raise. (ll. 582-85)

Ambition to wrest and posses control of the world is the theme here. However, as we have seen the value of that being wrested and controlled is questionable. Conquest is to be seen as questionable activity -- and might be considered merely an Earthly game. Certainly, in the Christian tradition things of the earth pale in comparison with the heavenly, but even for the pagan conqueror considerations of mortality can dampen enthusiasm for conquest. The following episode from the mythology of Alexander the Great illustrates the point: despite Alexander's unparalleled success as a

conqueror -- despite the vastness of the lands that he holds -- it is recognized that at death his body will cover a piece of earth only the size of himself. It soon becomes apparent that the state of the world under the soldier's stewardship is even less rosy than it was under the king's. The soldier's world is described by Simplicity as one which has become a vast military encampment, populated by "hucksters", makers of swords, and prostitutes. And the world's prospects are indeed not good since a huckster is, according to the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, a pedlar or a hawker in whose hands (or handling) "In Huckster's hands (handling)" things are "likely to be roughly used or lost; beyond the likelihood of recovery".

Now that the world has been tossed from king to soldier, the soldier of the induction, who watches this performance with Jupiter, is roused to speak, expressing a desire to forego his place as spectator and join the game:

> *Sol.* Now 'tis the soldier's time; great Jupiter,
> Now give me leave to enter on my fortunes,
> The world's our own. (ll. 611-12)

However, a soldier's "fortune" is soon exposed as fleeting when a sea captain threatens the land-captain and seizes the world for himself. The brand of sovereignty favoured by the land and sea captains is one of military conquest. However, as we saw earlier, conquest is not to be overvalued. This message is repeated by the next claimant of the world, a Flamen (a priest),[412] who reminds these earthly conquerors of another, and "better", world:

> What is't to be the lord of many battles,

[412] The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines Flamen as: A priest devoted to the service of a particular deity.

> And suffer to be overrun within you?
> Abroad to conquer, and be slaves at home? (ll. 696-98)

Through use of a macrocosm/ microcosm trope, his questions emphasize that military conquest has little to do with a healthy soul.

In the interests of brevity, we might choose to skip over the further machinations and passages of the world. Suffice it to say that, true to masque convention, when all antic threats have been disposed of the world is restored into the hands of its "rightful" owner -- who is, naturally, the king.

At this point all prior claimants agree that the "orb" should be delivered into the hands of the King, the Flamen stating:

> *Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis,*
> Which shows,
> That if the world form itself by the king,
> 'Tis fit the former should command the thing. (ll. 817-20)

Again, in typical masque style, the exemplary virtue of the ruler is invoked as a model to guide and protect all. Given such a display of solidarity and virtue, Deceit and the Devil flee and the king, restored to sovereignty, exclaims:

> How blest am I in subjects! here are those
> That make all kingdoms happy, - worthy Soldier,
> Fair Churchman, and thou uncorrupted Lawyer,
> Virtue's great miracle, that hast redeem'd
> All justice from her ignominious name. (ll.825-8)

The sport of tossing sovereignty from one figure to another is now finished. Prudence, tact, and the conventions of the masque form itself, all dictate that the King will ultimately regain sovereignty over the globe, or ball, that is the Earth.

Thus, as we near the masque's conclusion, we reach a point where all conflict appears to have been resolved. At this time, Simplicity looks again at the state of the world, now that it is again under the rule of the king, and sees that it too is redeemed:

> Ay, marry, my masters, now it looks like a brave world indeed: how civilly those fair ladies go yonder! by this hand, they are neither trimmed, not trussed, nor poniarded; wonderment! O, yonder's a knot of fine, sharp-needle-bearded gallants, but that they wear stammel cloaks, methinks, instead of scarlet. (ll.831-6)

Implications for the Jacobean Court

We must now ask, how Simplicity's "brave world" compares to James's court, which in the years leading up to 1620 was "renowned for its venality, for its intemperance, for favouritism so extreme that it subverted good government, for neglect of affairs of state, and for gross flattery".[413] I would argue that auditors hostile to James's rule and policies would have taken heart from this monologue, for it exposes the obvious differences between the fictional world of the masque -- a world of order and newly resolved

[413] Rowse, A. L. *The Elizabethan Renaissance: The Life of the Society* (London: Macmillan, 1971), p. 16.

tensions -- and the "real" world of Jacobean England. Simply put, Simplicity's description of the world, describing as it does a kingdom free from excessive ornament and unburdened by extravagant fashion, does not accord with James's Britain, in which a taste for extravagant fashion is found both in the court's love of masque, and also in its fondness for sports including masques and tennis.

James's court was condemned for its depravity from very early in the reign; in fact "The most notorious excesses of the reign", excesses that "did so much to damage the reputation of the Court among the more sober, pious and industrious sections of society", occurred in 1606 when James was visited by the King of Denmark. Moreover, the critic Graham Parry writes that dramatists reflected such unfavourable sentiment, or at least avoided explicit praise in their works around this time: "The vigorous line of anti-Court moralizing and satire that runs through the plays of Middleton, Webster and Tourneur indicates a well-founded prejudice against the whole ethos of the Court, while Shakespeare's representations of Court life from *Hamlet* to *Cymbeline* do not provide much material for the panegyrist".[414] Furthermore, such damning criticism of courtly excess and depravity was far more conspicuous in James's reign than it had been during the reign of Elizabeth; in the Jacobean period "there remains...an enduring impression of moral repugnance, a feeling that the Court is an infectious centre of rottenness in society. This sensation comes across much more strongly in the plays written during James's reign than it did in those written under Elizabeth...".[415]

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[414] Parry, p. 19; p. 59; p. 59; p. 60.

[415] Parry, p. 60-1.

In Middleton and Rowley's masque, excess becomes the subject of the fictional king's final speech, and again, we find a pointed reference to those great houses of the induction and thus to James's court; addressing all, the fictional king declares:

> Continue but thus watchful o'er yourselves,
> That the great cunning enemies, Deceit,
> And his too-mighty lord, beguile you not,
> And you're the precious ornaments of state,
> The glories of the world, fellows to virtues,
> Masters of honest and well-purchas'd fortunes,
> And I am fortunate in your partnership;
> But if you ever make your hearts the houses
> Of falsehood and corruption, ugliness itself
> Will be a beauty to you, and less pointed at:
> Spots in deformed faces are scarce noted,
> Fair cheeks are stain'd if ne'er so little blotted. (ll. 840-51)

Indeed, the masque's message, in the above, might be seen as one of warning to James to reform his court (that is, to encourage moderation and discourage excessive "sport"), or to risk the loss of power. Certainly, as we have seen, observers such as Graham Parry consider that James's court suffered from considerable corruption and excess. For Parry, "Indignation and outrage at the degeneracy of the Court" can be seen in the drama of the period, drama in which "...the luxurious evil of the palace is spectacularly evoked and energetically condemned. The lustfulness of courtiers, the vain pride of their costume, the prodigal excess of food and drink, the treachery, hypocrisy, and intrigue that never cease, all the phosphorescent decadence of Court society glows before the audience...".[416] Others such as Maurice

[416] Parry, p. 61.

Hunt claim that idleness was a particularly conspicuous characteristic of James' court; and importantly, that this idleness is only emphasized in a 'peaceful' court.: "Since the middle ages, war had been the primary work of the nobility, but with the long peace of 1604-12, the venerable idleness of the aristocracy became even more apparent". [417] We can build upon Parry and Hunt's observations in order to suggest that those pursuits typically seen as the pursuits of peace (ie. those pastimes which are undertaken in times of peace -- pastimes we have labeled 'sport') could easily, then, be considered as mere 'idleness' by those who were more military minded. Or, even by those who simply considered that the Court's tastes for sport were excessive and therefore ultimately unproductive to the State. When it is excessively practiced, recreation necessarily comes at a cost. There must be less time available for other activities, be they work, training for warfare (or the defence of the realm), or religious observance. A courtier's fondness for sport will have implications for his ability to defend the realm, something implied in the following question posed by R. Niccols in "London's Artillerie": "...can soft shakes of wooll, or tennis balles, Like iron bullets, batter Strongst walles?".[418] Those who considered military activities to be important would therefore rail against sport if it was seen to be excessively practised.

Thus, whilst the masque concludes with a dialogue between soldier and scholar in which they re-affirm that the age is a glorious and virtuous one, our protagonist's newfound confidence in the leadership is easier to

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[417] Hunt, p. 12.

[418] R. Niccols, "London's Artillerie" (1616), ll. 65-76, London: Printed by B. A. and T. Fawcet for L. Chapman, 1627.

reconcile with the fictional court of the masque than with James's own court:

> *Sol.* The world
> Is in a good hand now, if it hold, brother.
>
> *Scho.* I hope, for many ages.
>
> *Sol.* Fare thee well, then;
> I'll over yonder, to the most glorious wars
> That e'er fam'd Christian kingdom.
>
> *Scho.* And I'll settle
> Here, in a land of most glorious peace
> That ever made joy fruitful, where the head
> Of him that rules, to learning's fair renown,
> Is doubly deckt with laurel, and a crown,
> And both most worthily.
> ...the glory
> Of noble actions bring white hairs upon thee! (ll. 874-84)

The concluding couplet of this dialogue significantly seeks to reinvolve, or re-inscribe, James's court into the performance, the Scholar stating:

> Present our wish with reverence to this place,
> For here't must be confirm'd, or't has no grace. (ll.885-86)

However, it is not possible to reconcile James's peacetime court, which the induction has shown to be preoccupied with the suspect (or at the very least ambiguous) pastime sport of tennis, with the realm described by the Scholar as "a land of most glorious peace". Sports including tennis, not to mention the activity of the masque itself, were always open to charges that they were merely idle vanities. Since these sports were, in effect, the products of Peace -- in that they were most indulged in in peaceful times -- then

idleness, sport, and peace are in some respects conflated in the minds of those who would prefer a military path.

In conclusion, Middleton and Rowley, in *The World Tost at Tennis*, appear to have made apposite use of the trope of tennis in order to present their audience with a work which has the issues of peace and sovereignty at its very heart.

Implications for the 1623 Folio *Henry V*

It seems to me that any reader of the 1623 Folio of Shakespeare's *Henry V* familiar with Middleton and Rowley's masque, and perhaps familiar with James' use of tennis metaphor also, would have come to the play with a great deal of tennis related 'baggage' (or context). That is, the sport of tennis -- as we have seen throughout this thesis -- is used in literary works of the period to signal the presence of certain issues and themes; so, in Middleton and Rowley's masque the title (and device) of the work itself and the action of the passage of the world as if, metaphorically, a tennis-ball, help to signal the masque's interest in issues such as sovereignty and peace (and, by implication, also war). The imagery of tennis balls being tossed about also highlights a world of flux and change and this, when taken to its logical endpoint, calls for questions as to whether life, ambition, and earthly action can all be thought of as merely sport; all, in fact, ultimately as unimportant as a game of tennis.

In the use of 'tennis' in *World Tost at Tennis*, it seems to me, we have an example of how authors are able to make use of well known traditions and images to call forth in the minds of audiences, in shorthand as it were, a complex set of ideas. Two particular ideas called forth in *The World Tost at Tennis* -- through both the action and the imagery -- are that one's position at the top is a precarious one (sovereignty is changeable and fleeting); and, potentially, when we also invoke the *de contemptu mundi* tradition, that life itself is a game -- the struggles for sovereignty (for possession of the globe) are deflated somewhat if the globe is considered merely a tennis ball.

The above ideas are not new in the period, nor are they present only in Middleton and Rowley's masque. In fact, as we have seen in earlier chapters, it is common in the literature of the period for the world to be shown (through the tennis metaphor) to be a changeable place, a place in which man's status and achievements are not secure. Man's success is uncertain, as the world is a place in which soldiers "...tosse and tennis Crownes and Monarchies, & bestow them at pleasure".[419] Moreover, world success is so uncertain that the world might best -- as authors including Shakepseare have told us -- be compared with a tennis court and man himself with a ball:

> A man whom both the waters and the wind
> In that vast tennis-court hath made the ball
> For hem to play upon entreats you pity him;[420]

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[419] Anon. (1619), "Two wise men and all the rest fooles", (VI.i), [London] 1619.

[420] Willliam Shakespeare, *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (II.i.59-61).

Life can be considered but a game, and one which is ultimately out of man's control: "We are merely the stars' tennis-balls,/ Struck and bandied which way please them".[421]

In such a world -- a world in which man might be tossed like a tennis ball -- the desire for success is, itself, misplaced:

> do not thou thyself deceive, with hope of worldly showes...what seest thou foole in princely hauls, that maie a poore man eas, whose state is toste with Tennis balls, and turnes with winde & seas:...thei that moste for Fortune Strive, doe live in furthest dout (Churchyard, "of wandryiyng and gadding abroad").

Man's state, as the *World Tost at Tennis* has shown, and as Churchyard also says, is "toste with Tennis balls". For Renaissance audiences, man's successes in such a world are fleeting: "I thinke the world is but a Tenis-court,/ Where Fortune doth play States, tosse men for Balls".[422]

The existence of such ideas in the literature and thought of the period running up to 1623 suggests that we should consider whether the tennis and sporting imagery in Shakepseare's play might also signal, in Shakespeare's work, the issues we have seen above. Specifically, having recovered the above sporting context, we might want to revisit Shakespeare's play in order to see what, if anything, it has to say about either uncertain sovereignty, or the idea of life as a game. Our 'recovered' sporting context (from works such as *The World Tost at Tennis* and others)

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[421] John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi* (1612), Elizabeth M. Brennan (ed.), (London: New Mermaid, 1964), (V.iv.53-54).

[422] Sir W. Alexander, Earl of Stirling, *The Alexandræan Tragedie*. First performed 1605-7. London: Printed by Tho. Harper, 1637, (5.1.2577-8).

encourages us to look for such issues, as audiences of the period, those familiar with the tennis imagery, are likely to have done.

Henry V: A vainglorious or overly-ambitious king?

The theme of *de contemptu mundi* (contempt of the world), the view that "life in the world of time is only a temporary condition and that the eternal afterlife is what really matters"[423], is one which, as I have argued in this thesis, is closely associated in literature with the imagery of the sport of tennis. Given this, what then, is one to make of Shakespeare's *Henry V*, a play in which the ambitious King Henry embarks on an earnest quest for military (earthly) success?

What is one to make of Henry's actions and desire for glory, a desire he states clearly when the King proclaims that he expects to emerge glorious from war:

> ...like a king, and show my sail of greatness
> When I do rouse me in my throne of France
> ...
> I will rise there with so full a glory
> That I will dazzle all the eyes of France...
> Yea strike the Dauphin blind to look on us. (1.2.274-80)

[423] Leslie Thompson (compiled and ed.), *Fortune: All is but Fortune* (The Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington D.C., 2000), p. 13.

How do such words fit a schematic where ambition could be seen as a questionable quality? A schematic where the man who strove for greatness would inevitably fall, and, one in which, rather than strive for glory, "...the best way to save oneself not only in the next world but even in this one was to remain quietly in the station that God had assigned..."?[424]

Ambition was a dangerous thing in Renaissance England, as the Earl of Essex had found earlier in the century. The Earl of Essex was executed on the 25th of February 1601. The report of his confession upon the scaffold includes the lines: "...I have bestowed my youth in pride, lust, uncleanness, vain glory, and divers other sins according to the fashion of this world, wherein I have offended most grievously my God".[425] The officially sanctioned account of the Earl of Essex's downfall, *A Declaration of the Treasons of the Late Earl of Essex*, S.T.C., 1133, sets out to show "...first the ambitious nature of the late Earl to make himself the first person in the Kingdom...".[426] Essex's downfall was seen as illustrating the maxim that where there was a question of excessive ambition there was the need for retribution.[427]

Ultimately, explanations of the Earl's downfall demonstrate that this was a period in which many considered that: "By and large, it was better to be good than to be a success, and the man who performed well in the rank that God had assigned him was better off than he who tried to alter to his own

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[424] F. J. Levy. *Tudor Historical Thought* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1967, p. 224.

[425] Harrison, p. 163 quoting *State Papers Domestic*, 278:112,114.

[426] Harrison, p. 177.

[427] Levy, p. 229.

advantage the relationships established by the Deity".[428] Broadly speaking, then, in such a philosophy Henry V is open to criticism simply on the basis of his ambitions, simply on the basis that he chooses to go to war.

Those who occupy themselves with high affairs will be subject to the vagaries of fortune, says William Wyrley in 1595, and will likely be both prosperous and desolate in turns (ll. 1254-60), for, when all is said, "Such are the turns of fortuns tennise ball." (l. 1314)[429] This is a theme repeated in John Norden (1614), where the subject is said to be "*...mans inconstant lot...*"(l. 77), and the message is: "In this lifes *Labyrinth*, men rise and fall"(l. 449). In delivering this message the sport of tennis proves a useful conceit:

> That is to day what yesterday, 'twas not.
> No state stands long, but riseth or it fals,
> And best resembles tossed tennis bals.
> Now striken hye, then lights, and then rebounds,
> One now is low, then raised, then redounds. (ll. 78-82)

It is those most ambitious to climb who are, it is said, most likely to fall; the ambitious want to hold and 'sway' the orb of the Earth, and more:

> What most distracts, is haut *Ambition*:
> Neuer content, with Earthes fruition,
> For had he got, this ample Orbe would yet:
> Not rest content, nor bound his will, to get.
>
> Then sway they th' earth, as if whole orbe were theirs.[430] (ll. 619-30; l. 649)

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[428] Levy, p. 214.

[429] Wyrley, William, 1565-1618 'CAPITALL DE BVZ. THE HONORABLE LIFE AND LANGVISHING DEATH OF Sir Iohn de Gralhy Capitall de Bvz', in The Original Chronicle (1903-1908) Imprinted ... by I. Iackson, for Gabriell Cawood, 1592

[430] Norden, John, 1548-1625?, THE LABYRINTH OF MANS-LIFE (1614), Printed ... for Iohn Budge [etc.] ll.

I think the *imagery* present here, that of a figure holding and controlling the *orb* of the Earth, lends itself to the comparison of orb of Earth and tennis ball; the ambitious, it seems, would like to hold and control the Earth as if it were nothing more than a tennis ball.

> Mischieuous fortune thus to and fro doth cast,
> These conquerors now, are prisoners to their thrall,
> From one to thother thus she hurls the ball.
>
> ...
>
> ...and thus coy fortune sourts,
> Some now aloft and then cast downe we see,
> Thus gasing stages euer filled bee,
> He was, he is, heis vp, and now heis downe,
> He liues, he dies, here is, here was the towne.[431]

Wyrley writes of Fortune rising and dashing men's hopes and ambitions. Importantly, the conceit includes the idea that conquerors are -- by Fortune -- 'hurled the ball' in turn as they rise and then fall (ll. 2581-823; 2761;65). The work appeared in 1592.

Whether one is ultimately expected to disavow all human activity in *de contemptu mundi* style is not entirely clear; what was clear, however, is that one is expected to at least *question* the value of earthly glory, wealth, and power. And, certainly, the tennis metaphor is often used to counsel against vainglorious action:

William Wyrley

[431] Wyrley, William, 1565-1618, 'LORD CHANDOS. THE GLORIOVS LIFE AND HONORABLE DEATH OF SIR IOHN CHANDOS', in *The Original Chronicle* (1903-1908) Imprinted ... by I. Iackson, for Gabriell Cawood, 1592 http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion-us&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:po:Z200540973:2

> ...doe not thou thyself deceiue, with hope of worldly showes....
> What seest thou foole in princely hauls, that maie a poore man eas,
> Whose state is toste with tennis balls, and turns with winde & seas:
> ...thei that moste for Fortune Striue, doe liue in furthest dout.[432]

Henry's choice of war is potentially to be viewed as merely the over-reaching ambitions of an earthly sovereign. What needs to be remembered is that earthly gain is futile, because success is fleeting, sovereigns will rise and fall, and death will ultimately come to all.

I would argue that Shakespeare's play expresses exactly this message in its closing lines. The final Chorus highlights that Henry has had great success in life: "...the world's best garden he achieved,/ And all of it left to his son imperial lord." (5.3.3.7-8) The King's death is noted, and we are told that Henry V exits the world a great sovereign, leaving all to his son. Given that we also remember the genesis of the dynasty (beginning with Henry IV) we see that in life Henry V has risen a great distance indeed. Yet we also remember that all must die regardless of earthly station.

To further investigate this, we might look first to the well known English emblem book, Whitney's *Emblems* (London, 1586). Whitney investigates the above theme, -- in a number of his emblems.[433] The concept of *de contemptu mundi* is well expressed in the emblem "Mortui divitiae", or a dead man's riches (in Whitney's *Emblemes*), which emphasizes equality at death:

> The Princes greate, and Monarches of the earthe,

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[432] Thomas Churchyard, "of wandryng and gaddyng abroad", in *A pleasaunte Laborinth called Churchyardes Chance*, London: Printed ... by Edwarde Russell, 1566, ll. 2-8.
[433] Geffrey Whitney, *A Choice of Emblems* (1586), in Peter M. Daly (ed.), *The English Emblem Tradition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

Whoe, while they liu'de, the worlde might not suffice:
Yet can they claime, by greatnesse of their birthe,
To beare from hence, when nature life denies,
Noe more then they, who for releife did pyne,
Which is but this, a shrouding sheete of twyne.

Thoughe fewe there bee, while they doe flourishe heere,
That doe regarde the place whereto the muste:
Yet, thoughe theire pride like Lucifers appeere,
They shalbee sure at lengthe to turne to duste:
The Prince, the Poore, the Prisoner, and the slaue,
They all at lengthe, are summon'de to their graue.[434]

The transitory state of worldly things is emphasized, as is the false pleasure to be had. There is equality in death. The verse emphasizes that life is transitory and that death will at length turn all "into dust". The *contemptu mundi* tradition suggests that regardless of one's status or achievements in life all are equal at death -- as death and the loss of all earthly gains must eventually come to all: "The Prince, the Poore, The Prisoner, and the Slave,/ They all at lengthe, are summonde to their grave". At death, the verse points out, all worldly acquisition -- the cause of much pride -- loses its worth.[435]

The question one might ask of a figure such as Henry V is: "Why therefore should man seek treasures here on earth, when without delay, both that which is gathered, and the gatherer must passe away?".[436] Whitney's emblem suggests that conquest, and by implication the desire for wealth and power, was subject to question and criticism in the period. Other

[434] Daly, p. 182. Peter M. Daly (ed.), The English Emblem Tradition, p. 182

[435] Peter M. Daly (ed.), *The English Emblem Tradition*, p. 182.

[436] Forde, unpaginated.

authors, including Thomas Churchyard, remind us of where we should be looking (to the heavens), for this Earth is only part of the story, and a changeable and uncertain part at that: "The state of man, on strange hap hazard lies/ As one fals downe, so doth another rise." (ll. 594-95)

Returning to the Chorus of Shakespeare's play, we see that despite Henry's successes in France, the Chorus immediately shows us just how fleeting sovereignty and earthly gain may be when we hear how all of the King's achievements are lost, and quickly lost; under the rule of the young Henry VI France is lost and England bleeds.(5.3.3.12)

Henry V: Life as 'Play'.

We might close this chapter with a discussion of the suggestion that life itself could be viewed as play. Again, if one is to consider *Henry V*, in the context of the sporting imagery we have studied throughout this chapter, it is possible to *suggest* that the presence of tennis in Shakespeare's play helps to signal the play's interest in this idea.

It was possible for Renaissance thinkers to question the greatness of fame and conquest precisely because it was possible for life itself, in some respects, to be seen as "play". If we consider firstly the definition of play in the period we find that it was a multifaceted one:

> The word Play is sometimes used to signifie a sport or pastime, otherwhiles it notes unto us a Comoedy or Stage-Play, and in both these respects, may Fortune be said to be a Play: And first, Fortune

> is said to make a sport or pastime of all earthly things....Secondly, it signifies a Stageplay, & then the World's the Stage, and every man an Actor playing his part that Providence has allotted him, the good man acts a Comoedy, which has a doubtful beginning, a troublesome middle, but an happy end: on the contrary, wicked men act a Tragoedie, that has a pleasant beginning, but a sad and Tragicall ending....[437]

Notably, the second definition of play expressed above -- the idea that "Mans life's a Play, the World a stage, whereon Learn thou to play, or thou't be plaid upon"[438] -- is by no means alien to Shakespeare. From the opening address by the Chorus in *Henry V*, Henry's war is figured as, and emphasized as, some form of "play":

> O for a muse of fire, that would ascend
> The brightest heaven of invention,
> A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
> And monarchs to behold the swelling scene.
> Then should the warlike Harry, like himself,
> Assume the port of Mars, and at his heels
> (Leased in, like hounds) should famine, sword and fire
> Crouch for employment. But pardon, gentles all,
> The flat unraisèd spirits, that hath dared,
> On this unworthy scaffold, to bring forth
> So great an object....(I.0.1-11)

And in Shakespeare's play Canterbury's words further strengthen the identification:

> Look back into your mighty ancestors.
> Go, my dread lord, to your great-grandsire's tomb,
> From whom you claim. Invoke his warlike spirit,
> And your great-uncle's, Edward the Black Prince,
> Who on the French ground played a tragedy,

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[437] Forde, unpaginated.

[438] Forde, unpaginated.

Making defeat on the full power of France. (I.2.102-07)

In both instances, then, "the world's the stage" and "every man an actor" playing his part. It is also notable that Renaissance authors understood and utilized the first definition of "play" expressed above -- where life itself might be seen as a "sport or pastime". Moreover, metaphors from sports and games are commonly used to highlight this concept; this practice being taken to its extreme in Thomas Middleton's *A Game at Chess* (1624).[439] The idea can reasonably be said to have been widely understood, given the popularity of this work. Middleton's *A Game at Chess* was performed at the Globe in August 1624, and ran for an unprecedented nine successive days until closed down by authorities. During this time, it may have played to as many as 30,000 people.[440] Furthermore, if the popularity of Middleton's play is any guide, audiences must have also appreciated the presence of Metaphors from sports other than Chess which also find their way into *A Game at Chess*. In one instance, religious politics are described as a game of balloon-ball (loosely a form of tennis); the Black Knight stating of his rival:

> I'll make him the balloon-ball of the churches
> And both the sides shall toss him; he looks like one,
> A thing swelled up with mingled drink and urine,
> And will bound well from one side to another! (Act 2, sc.2, ll.72-75)

The term "game" is an important one in the work, and it has been argued that: "The play is an elaboration of a metaphor taken literally: human life *is* a chess game, and all men, whether Kings, Bishops, or Pawns...are just

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[439] Thomas Middleton, *A Game at Chess*, J. W. Harper (ed.) (The New Mermaids: Philip Brockbank and Brian Morris (gen. eds) (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1966).

[440] Harper, p. xii.

'shapes and pieces of the game'".[441] "Game" in Middleton's play has a multitude of meanings: "Sometimes it means game in the sense of object of pursuit; at others one's 'game' is one's role or job. When the Black Knight refers to the Prince's "sweet game of youth", the word is used as a metaphor for a period of life".[442]

A similar identification of life and the game of chess is expressed in Richard Brathwait's *The English Gentleman* (1630) -- the work also questioning the worth of "rank" or "degree" by raising the related issue of *de contemptu mundi*: "there is no one game which may seeme to represent the state of mans (sic) life to the full, so well as the Chesse".[443] The reason for this is that chess is able to invoke the idea of the *de contemptu mundi* tradition, for in chess

> ...you shall find Princes and Beggars and persons of all conditions ranked in their proper and peculiar places; yet when the game is done, they are all thrust up in a bagge together: and where then appears any difference btwixt the poorest beggar, and the potentest peece?[444]

The idea is one where earthly actions and status are to be exposed as suspect due to the briefness of life and, ultimately, an "...awareness of inescapable mutability". Closely related to the tradition of *contemptu mundi* are the medieval topio of *de casibus, ubi sunt,* and *memento mori.* All "are reflections of [an]...awareness of inescapable mutability".[445] Life is a chess

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[441] Middleton, *A Game at Chess,* p. xvii.

[442] Middleton, *A Game at Chess,* p. xviii.

[443] Brathwait, p. 170.

[444] Brathwait, p. 170.

[445] Leslie Thompsonp. 15; p. 15.

game for Brathwait, "a stage of human frailty",[446] where people have their ranks and degrees. However, when the game is over "there shall be no difference between the greatest and the least, highest and lowest".[447]

Nor can the point be easily missed. A theme of this collection, writes Tom Conley, is of human beings as players in the earthly arena. Writing on La Perrière's *Theatre des bons engins, auquel sont contenus cent Emblemes* (1539), Conley argues that the repetetition in La Perrière's work of "gridded surfaces" - the tiles of the tennis court floor, and the chess-board squares, for instance - suggests the "Ptolemaic grid", thus representing the sphere of human endeavour, and serving as an allegory for life, love, and war, and even of life and death.[448] The point is reiterated, and perhaps expressed best, by the author of the much later *Lusus Fortunae* (not surprisingly since the work's full title is: *Lusus Fortunae: The Play of Fortune continually Acted by the severall Creatures on the Stage of the World or, A glance at the various mutability, inconstancie, and uncertainty of all earthly things. From a consideration of the present Times.*):

> *Sceaena autem Mundus versatilis, histrio & alter, quiliest est hominum*: sayes the Christian poet: He that now acts the part of a Beggar, the next Scaene may be a King...Such is our life, and especially of those that serve the times, as a play upon the earth, they are not, are born, and those that are borne die...Thus we see how the Almighty doth change and turn this ball of World, where for a while we spend our time in but a serious play.[449]

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[446] Brathwait, p. 170.

[447] Brathwait, p. 171.

[448] Tom Conley, "Pierre Boaistuau's Cosmographic Stage: Theater, Text, and Map", pp. 59-86, in *Renaissance Drama*, New Series, XXIII, 1992), p. 72; p. 72.

[449] Forde, unpaginated.

Life was also described in terms of other games -- notably tennis -- and at times the descriptions were elaborate, lengthy, and well-considered:

> When we observe the Ball, how to and fro
> The Gamesters force it; we may ponder thus:
> That whil'st we live we shall be played with so,
> And that the World will make her Game of us.
> Adversities, one while our hearys constraine
> To stoope, and knock the Pavements of Despaire;
> Hope, like a Whirle-wind mounts us up againe,
> Till oft it lose us in the empty ayre.
> Sometimes, above the Battlements we looke;
> Sometimes, we quite below the Line are tost:
> Another-while against the Hazard strooke,
> We, but a little want, of being lost.
> ...
> When Balls against the Stones are hardest throwne,
> Then highest up into the Aire they fly;
> So, when men hurle us (with most fury) downe,
> Wee hopefull are to be advanc'd thereby:
> And, when they smite us quite unto the Ground,
> Then up to Heav'n , we trust, we shall rebound.[450]

Possibly the most comprehensive instance of the use of the tennis metaphor as a conceit for life is found in a work published outside the period we are most interested in (1634). Despite this late date, I think that it is instructive to quote the work at length, in order that we might appreciate the lengths unto which the conceit could ultimately be taken:

> **If** in my weake conceit (for selfe disport)
> The world I sample to a Tennis-court,
> Where fate and fortune daily meet to play,
> I doe conceive, I doe not much misse-say.
>
> All manner chance, are Rackets, wherewithall

[450] George Wither, *A Collection of Emblemes* (1635), emblem xvi of book 1, p. 16.

They bandie men like balls, from wall to wall:
Some over Lyne, to honour and great place;
Some under Lyne, to infame and disgrace;
Some with a cutting stroke, they nimby send
Into the hazzard placed at the end;

Resembling well the rest which all they have,
Whom death hath seiz'd, and placed in their grave:
Some o're the wall they bandie quite away,
Who never more are seene to come in play:
Which intimates, that even the very best
Are soone forgot of all, if once deceast.

So, (whether silke-quilt ball it bee, or whether
Made of course cloth, or of most homely lether;)
They all alike are banded to and fro,
And all at last to selfe same end do goe,
Where is no difference, or strife for place:
No odds betweene a Trype-wife and your Grace:[451]

The world is like a tennis court, chance bandies men about -- some to honour or disgrace -- and death takes all out of play. And when out of play, all ambitions are gone and all are equal (there is no strife for place) -- be they 'Trype-wife' or 'your Grace'.

When life is regarded as a game, honour and glory lose some of their shine. Ambitions to, as Henry V proclaims, "...rise...with so full a glory/... [as to]... dazzle all ... eyes"(1.2.278-79) might, in this context, seem somewhat misplaced. Perhaps the final word on the subject of life as a game might be

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[451] Lathum, William, 'Dopo il Givoco, cosi va nel sacco il Re, come il Pedone', (ll. 1-22) in *Phyala Lachrymarum* (1634), Printed by R. Y. for George Lathum [etc.] http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:lion-us&rft_id=xri:lion:ft:po:Z300410757:3

left to Francis Quarles, who leaves us in no doubt as to the value he ascribes to the pursuits of the ambitious and to earthly glory:

> Come, Reader, come; Ile light thine eye the way
> To view the Prize, the while the Gamesters play;
> Close by the Jack, behold Gill Fortune stands
> To wave the game; See, in her partiall hands
> The glorious Garland's held in open show,
> To cheare the Ladds, and crowne the
> Conq'rers brow;
> The world's the Jack; the Gamesters that contend,
> Are Cupid, Mammon: That juditious Friend,
> That gives the ground, is Satan; and the Boules
> Are sinfull Thoughts: The Prize, a Crowne for
> Fooles.[452]

[452] Leslie Thompson, p. 54 - image shown on p.64; citing Francis Quarles, *Emblemes* London, 1635, Book 1 no. 10.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have attempted to demonstrate that new and valuable insights into Shakespeare's *Henry V* may be achieved through recovering the sporting context of the play (especially with respect to Court Tennis) and through then applying this context to a reading of *Henry V*. The primary claim of this thesis has been that sporting metaphors (chiefly from Tennis) inform our reading of *Henry V* to an extent far greater than has previously been recognized.

Whilst the claim is a simple one, the process has been somewhat complicated by the fact that we are dealing with literary tradition and context, with historical texts and authors, with fact, fiction and historical 'mythology', and because we are attempting to recover the historical mindset of the Elizabethans and Jacobeans.

To deal with the above complications, to answer the questions implicit in them and to build enough context for our readings of *Henry V*, it has been necessary to include much discussion of other texts of the period and also to explain in detail the workings of the trope of Tennis in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period. In deviating from *Henry V* we have been able to re-build some of the literary and philosophical traditions of the period of this play's production, and thus have been better able to contextualise our reading of Shakespeare's work. Close analysis of Middleton's *Father Hubburd's Tales* and *The World Tost at Tennis*, of Dekker's *Old Fortunatus*, of the *Gesta Grayorum*, of *The Famous Victories*, of the

Mirror for Magistrates, of James's *Book of Sports*, and of sundry other minor texts, has provided the context for an interpretation of the play. Analysis of these other works has built a picture of Elizabethan and Jacobean attitudes to sport (especially Tennis), and has allowed us to recognise that literary traditions existed in which metaphors and images from sport could build great significance over long periods. We have 'recovered' an Elizabethan and Jacobean understanding of sport (as closely as we can), and recovered a literary tradition in which the sport of Tennis was used by authors to signify a complex range of meanings. Tennis, we have seen, was employed in the period as a marker for the ideas of rising and falling, for instability and uncertainly, for risk and chance, for Fortune, for life as a game, for sovereignty (suspect or not), for the excesses, idleness and prodigality of peace, for war, for un-godliness, and for youthful infelicities. In a more positive vein, we have also seen that Tennis could be viewed as an entirely appropriate exercise.

In recovering this complex trope of tennis we have been able to understand that audiences and readers of the Henry V story would have come to the various versions of that story with their own interpretive 'baggage'. Taking note of this, and making use of the tenets of New Historicism, we have attempted to re-read Shakespeare's *Henry V* as a contemporary and learned reader might have done. To do this, of course, has required us to make some assumptions and to accept that not everything can be proved beyond a doubt. In such an approach we must sometimes be satisfied with the 'plausible' or the 'possible'.

To conclude, we have seen how Shakespeare's audience must (through their knowledge of sport and the trope of Tennis) have found in *Henry V* a play much more concerned with Fortune, chance and risk, with youthful rulers, with arguments for and against war, and with earthly success and failure, than we, at

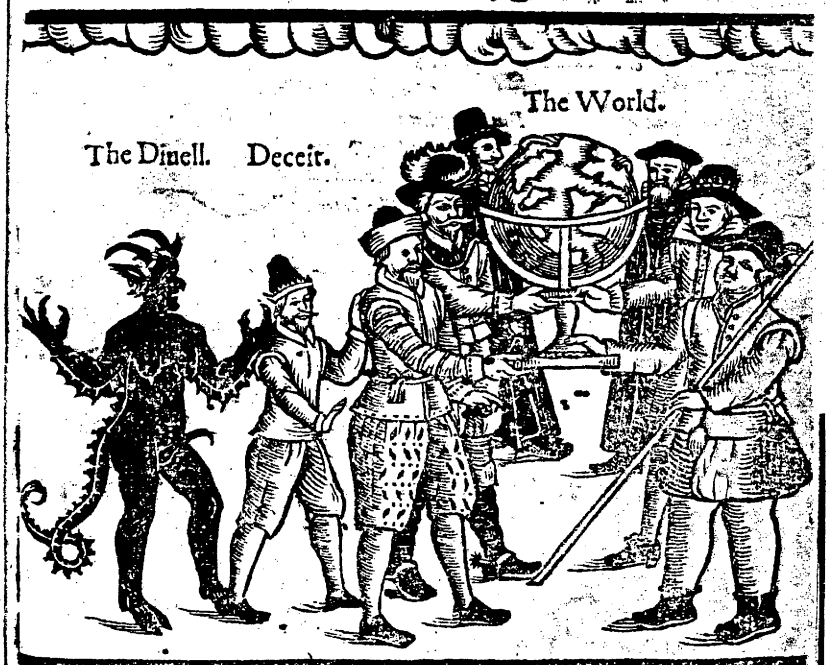
our distance of four hundred years after the work was written and performed, and with too little regard for the sporting contexts, might immediately recognise.

APPENDIX 1

A Courtly Maſque:
The Deuice called, The World toſt at Tennis.
As it hath beene diuers times Preſented to the
Contentment of many Noble and Worthy
Spectators.

By the PRINCE *his Seruants.*

Inuented and ſet downe, By { *Tho: Middleton* & *William Rowley* } Gent.



London printed by *George Purſlowe*, and are to be ſold by at Chriſt

APPENDIX 2: Use and Referencing of Electronic Material

When referencing internet sources (including material from databases), accepted academic practice dictates that one should include:

Author, title, publication date (and/or copyright date of the electronic resource), the date the material was accessed, and the URL.

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A vast range of information is available on the Internet and in various formats. The basic principle for referencing internet information is to describe the source and add the date you retrieved the material plus the web address.

In-text citation: usually consists of the name of an author or sponsoring organisation (OR a title) plus the date the information was produced or last revised.

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- an author or sponsoring organisation, and/or
- a title or description of the text
- a date of publication or update
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Points to note

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the reference list.)
Title: Use the title from within the document. If a document does not have a title you may be able to use the wording in the title bar at the very top of your screen-if it is descriptive of the contents. If neither of these is available or appropriate, use the URL as the title of the document.
Publication date: Use the date the material was created or last updated. If this is not stated, use the copyright date. Sometimes the copyright date is a span of years, e.g. © 2000-2004. In this case, use the later date. If no date is provided, use the abbreviation n.d. (no date).
Retrieval date: It is important to note the date you retrieved the material because the internet environment is dynamic and material is constantly changed, added and deleted.
URL: This is a crucial element that directs the reader to the source.

The above cited guidelines for referencing internet material can be found on the Deakin University website, 2006. Retrieved 3 April 2006,

http://www.deakin.edu.au/studentlife/academic-skills/undergraduate/handouts/e-reference.php

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When it comes to use of the Chadwyck Healey collections, we might take note of the following:

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http://collections.chadwyck.com/marketing/academics/textconv.jsp

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